

ACCOMPANYING THE MARGINALISED WOMEN IN SOUTH ASIA

A profile on FMA India SHG National Network



NH-100

Edited by

Joseph Lumin Priscilla

16329



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ACCOMPANYING THE MARGINALISED WOMEN IN SOUTH ASIA

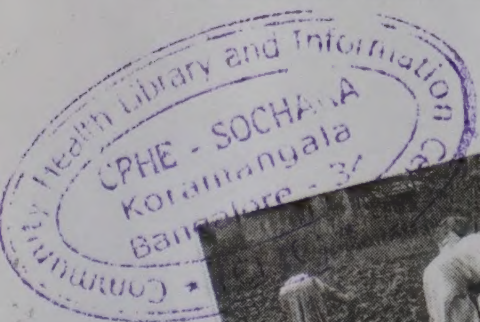
A profile on FMA India SHG National Network



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FOREWORD



Woman is a fine example of what can be achieved if the will power to succeed is not controlled by the society but allowed to be blossomed. Every woman is a missionary and an ideal ethical person. She does achieve great things in life with exemplary integrity. Everything devised by the hand of woman has a pragmatic outlook and are result oriented. It

is enough just to kindle the already existing fire within this great master piece of God.

More important is to bring women who are neglected and downtrodden into the mainstream in order to accelerate the progress of the humanity and the nation. It is the work of the committed and dedicated group of women who have to light lamps of awareness and literacy and to give a new turn to the process of social development which will energize the women to rise up with renewed strength.

This compilation is indeed a testimony to the inherent strength of women who have harnessed their energy in empowering hundred of thousands of women and promoted the development of women welfare in a planned manner. My sincere appreciation goes to all the women activists, especially our sisters, who devote their time and energy towards the emancipation of women.

A philosopher must live before he can philosophize. So also women must be courageous and well prepared before reaching out to others. One cannot expect an intellectually immature, emotionally unbalanced and economically crippled person to be a successful entrepreneur.

This directory indeed is an outcome of the collective efforts of all FMA provinces of India with sample success stories and the new ventures which the women at the ground level have initiated exhibiting their realized potentialities. At this juncture, I appreciate Fr. Joseph Xavier SJ, who has motivated and assisted with his constant support the Social Development Coordinators towards this achievement. I gratefully remember the COMIDE team, who by their constant accompaniment enabled the Social Development Coordinators to evaluate their works and plan new strategies for the enhancement of the quality of life of the marginalized and depressed women. I congratulate Sr. Anna Thekke, the National Development Forum Coordinator, who worked with youthful enthusiasm and energy to make this effort a reality. The catalyst who gave shape to this development of the directory is Sr. Joseph Lumin Priscilla, who has taken good initiative to prepare and compile this directory. My heartfelt gratitude also goes to Technical Assistant Ms. Agnes Mary.

As it is said, "It is less difficult to collect millions of rupees than to secure one selfless worker." This Directory is concise, precise and with full of relevant information and data that can serve as a point of reference for all those who work with zeal for the liberation of women. I dedicate this directory to all our sisters in South Asia, lay collaborators, well-wishers and partners who journey with us in realizing the vision of our founders Don Bosco and St. Mary Mazzarello.

May the Lord bless all women and into that heaven of real freedom let our country awake.

Sr. Maryann Fernando.

Sr. Mary Ann Fernando

*Provincial of Chennai Province and
Coordinator, Provincial Conference of India*



In this compilation, "Accompanying the Marginalised Women in South Asia", I have made an attempt to consolidate the daring and inspiring works of our FMAs (Salesian sisters) who have accomplished great things for and with the marginalised women in South Asia, particularly in India with SHG

network. The efforts of our sisters with the collaboration of the lay coordinators have left an indelible impact ushering in changes in the attitudes, thinking patterns, and standard of living of the marginalised women. Many years of hard work have enhanced numerous women to have self-esteem and self-confidence to claim their rights and progressively eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. The entrepreneurship activities have increased the vitality and well being of the families and that of the village communities in general. This book amply displays that when women come together and act decisively the community is empowered.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the sisters and lay collaborators who have creatively and systematically contributed in very many ways empowering the last and the least. I also extend my gratitude to women who have shared their successful experiences as members of the Self Help Groups, and others who through Income Generation Programmes have reclaimed their dignity and improved their economic status. I am grateful to the sisters who have shared

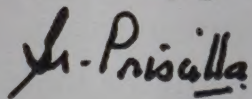
their rich experiences, personal stories and struggles while serving at the grassroots amidst various obstacles. The success stories have indeed increased the worth of this book.

Let us then continue as FMA India, to challenge the world by proclaiming that the poor and the marginalized women of the society, if motivated and guided could bring about conspicuous transformation in their families and in society.

I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to Fr. Joseph Xavier SJ who encouraged, supported and guided me in this work. I extend the same to Ms. Agnes, the technical assistant and Mr. P.Sivanandam, Sivasanka Graphics, who has designed this book.

May God bless our united efforts and lead us all to work with enthusiasm in favour of the weak and the less advantaged people of our society today.

With every good wish!



Sr. Joseph Lumin Priscilla FMA

Social Development Coordinator

Chennai Province

Auxilium Centre

Provincial office

84, St. Andrew's Road

Bandra, Mumbai 400 050



I am pleased to know that a souvenir booklet is being published on "A Profile on FMA- India SHG National Network". Since a couple of years all our FMA provinces in India have been engaged in women empowerment ministry that aims at enabling women to live in dignity as active citizens, while at the same time participating in the process of enjoying full human rights and sustaining the ecology and environment in solidarity, justice and peace.

The formation of Self Help Groups is one of the main strategies for the empowerment of women, particularly in the village set-up. The main areas of intervention of the Development Offices of the provinces have been socio-economic empowerment, various categories of IGPs, health services, education of children, knowledge of various government and diocesan schemes available, linkages with GOs and NGOs as well as Advocacy.

Other important aspects that have been emphasized are the training and awareness programmes, the organization and celebration of religious and social festivals, discussing village issues, helping to solve individual problems and encouraging the women to participate in dharnas, marches and rallies, thus living active citizenship.

Our provinces desire to move from 'empowerment of women' towards 'transformation of women' so that they can become active agents of change in society and thus promote a better quality of life for themselves and for others.

General Chapter 22 is leading us ever more in the direction of solidarity and empowerment of young girls and women. Congratulations and best wishes to all the Sisters and their lay collaborators who are engaged in the ministry of 'Empowerment of women'.

Sr. Wilma de Souza

Sr. Wilma de Souza fma

Provincial

Auxilium convent

Dum Dum

Kolkatta



I am glad to know that the directory which is a collective effort of all the FMA Provinces of India with sample success stories and other new initiatives is going to be a very useful weapon for all those who are dedicated to the cause of women empowerment. I appreciate and congratulate all those who have contributed in bringing out this book. May God bless their generous endeavor for the upliftment of the poor and marginalized.

Sincere commitment and dedicated service is the hallmark of every success. I am sure that the directory will inspire all those who are involved in the developmental work to break the shackles that oppress women which will enable them to lead a life of dignity and freedom; to make them leaders who will try all possible ways to remove exploitation of any sort and to work for justice and truth.

May Mary our Blessed Mother help you and guide you to promote the right and dignity of every woman.

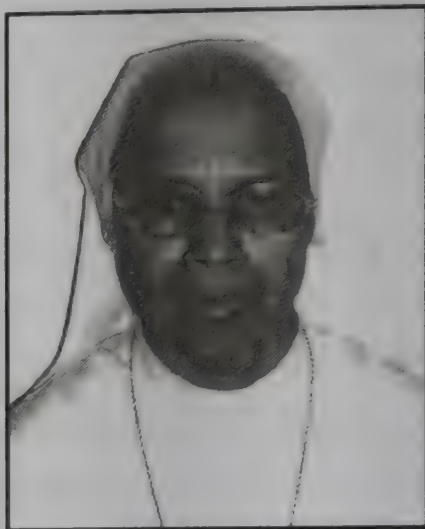
Affectionately,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Sr. Maria Pettayil". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Sr. Maria Pettayil

Provincial

Auxilium Provincial House
Christian Basti GMC Road
Guwahati – 781 005
Assam



I sincerely congratulate Sr. Priscilla for the initiative you have taken to prepare this book “A profile on FMA India SHG National Network”. It is a source of great joy and encouragement to perceive fruits of life in abundance even as you venture to disseminate the message of the foreseeing love of God and foster a sense of evangelical solidarity with those less disadvantaged of the society through this means of communication.

The FMA India is committed to promote cooperation for development in a great variety of contexts. Our duty is to offer young men and women from disadvantaged socio-cultural backgrounds, conditions for human growth that open up new vistas of hope, while promoting communion in a reciprocal appreciation for diversity. As members of the Church and faithful to the Salesian Charism, true development means the transition for each and all of us from less humane conditions to more humane ones where the evaluation of each human being is always based on the Gospel.

In our effort to coordinate our service of promoting a way of life based on solidarity, we need to keep in mind the approach suggested in the encyclical (Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*,

n. 31b.) "We contribute to a better world only by doing good now with full commitment and wherever we have the opportunity, independently of partisan strategies and programmes".

Mary our Blessed Mother urge each one of us and our provinces to undertake courageous daring journeys of conversion to give renewed life to our charismatic identity and to make this identity relevant in our lives and in the lives of those less fortunate than us.

With God's blessings and good wishes,

Sr. Teresa Puthenpurakal

Sr. Teresa Puthenpurakal

Provincial

Salesian Sisters

Sacred Heart Convent

Old Madras Road

Virgonagar P.O

Bangalore – 560 049



I sincerely appreciate and congratulate FMA National Development Forum for this inspiring venture in bringing out “Accompanying the Marginalized Women in South Asia – A profile on FMA India SHG National Network”.

It is the first time such an effort is creatively revealed in the form of a Directory. Definitely this Directory will be of great use in promoting greater coordination, communion and communication among the sisters, lay volunteers and lay animators to make our mission and formation more and more effective and efficient. I hope and pray that our effort to develop and uplift the poor and the downtrodden may bear abundant fruits as it gets wider publicity and visibility through this publication.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Sr. Rosy Malayatty'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and 'R'.

Sr. Rosy Malayatty FMA

Provincial

Auxilium

Nongthymmai

Shillong – 793 014

Meghalaya N.E. India



Dear Rev. Sr. Anna T
Coordinator of National
Development Forum and
Provincial Social Development
Coordinators,

It is indeed a great privilege and joy to felicitate FMA National Development Forum India for preparing a Directory on Women Empowerment Programme. My heartiest congratulations to all the Sisters who are directly involved in this area for this marvellous initiative and achievement. It is laudable that National Development Forum has taken seriously their commitment and we have seen its growth in these past few years.

On behalf of all the Sisters and lay collaborators in the Province of Shillong, especially women who are the protagonists, I sincerely thank and appreciate your efforts for the welfare of women. I believe that this achievement will strengthen the bond of unity as FMA India not only in this sector but in all areas.

As you continue to journey, I trust that National Development Forum will constantly work to realize the belief that women are the key to any sustainable development and that the well-being of children, families and the entire society largely depends on their empowerment.

May Mary our Mother, teacher and guide, continue to inspire you.

With all good wishes and assurance of prayers

Sr. Rosa Pyngrope

Sr. Rosa Pyngrope, FMA
Provincial

SOCIAL MINISTRY OF FMA INDIA

– A Historical perspective

Coming together is the beginning, staying together is strength and working together is success. Social ministry has its roots in the Salesian Congregation from its very inception. Our Holy Founder Don Bosco clearly discerned this during his time and set us an example for us to follow. Sensing the needs of the youth of his time, he started establishing technical training centres, which provided them with skills, employment and all round growth. Oratories offered them places to learn, recreate, pray and relax. Through every activity he left a message to the world 'Finding joy in accompanying and caring the less privileged' using the available resources and talents of the society. Thus, Don Bosco stands tall as a promoter of social ministry.



The ministry of St. Mary Mazzarello is not different from that of Don Bosco. She equipped herself with skills as Don Bosco did by learning tailoring in order to help the poor girls earn a livelihood and acquire a skill as part of women empowerment. The young girls who lost hope in life because of denial of their human dignity were accommodated in the institution and given confidence and courage to face the challenges of life through education and skills training thus empowering them to be self reliant. In their own way, they fought for human rights where it was violated.

Lives of Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello clearly depict that social ministry was a priority to them and disadvantaged children, youth and women were the focus groups.

Dawn of social ministry in India

As a first initiative to create a deeper conviction on the need and importance of entering more actively into empowering young girls and women, a seminar on women and peace was organized by the centre – Rome, in Chennai from 23rd – 28th April 2002 for the delegates from the 6 FMA provinces in India. This meet made a profound analysis on the situation of women in Asia in the various contexts in which they worked, the conflict they underwent, violation of their rights etc. Based on the discussion, action plans were drawn considering the importance and the urgency of promoting an authentic and sustainable development for women. The outcome of the meeting is as follows:

- To strongly condemn all situations in which women are exploited and deprived of their dignity.
- To sustain and promote gender sensitive critical education.
- To network with similar institutions on the issue
- To advocate at the policy making level concerning women's issue
- To foster a fuller understanding of the social teaching of the church, so as to further the respect of women's rights.

Following this a series of workshops and seminars were held in India and abroad in the consecutive years, as given below.

1. FMA National Meet on Gender Development, at Chennai from 2nd – 4th October 2003.
2. World Women's Forum, at Bombay in January 2004
3. 2nd FMA National women's meet, Chennai, 1st – 3rd April 2005.
4. Economia Solidale, Spain 17th – 24th August, 2005.
5. 3rd National Women's Meet, Chennai, 29th April – 2nd May 2006.

6. 4th FMA National Women Coordinators Meet, Bombay, 16th – 19th July 2007
7. World Women's Forum, Korea in 2008

Knowledge and insights received from these seminars were translated into action as the 6 FMA provinces (Shillong, Guwahati, Kolkata, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai) of India seriously took up women development activities and earnestly initiated new programmes in their respective provinces.

The Participative Strategic Planning (PSP)

PSP initiated by COMIDE in all the six FMA provinces across India brought in deeper convictions and thorough knowledge on the surroundings and the lives of the people. PSP also helped us to chalk out concrete action plans, a foundation to work upon.

From 2000 onwards, all the 6 provinces began the formation of Self Help Groups for women which was one of the primary interventions in the social ministry. This work established more rapport with the people and provided opportunities to learn from the realities on the situation of the poor women. It also opened new avenues in social ministry. Development Offices were set up and clear vision and mission were evolved. Among the 6 Development Offices 3 are registered and other 3 are in the process of registration. The staff, sisters and lay collaborators, were trained professionally to take up the emerging challenges in the social sector effectively and to offer quality services to the target groups. Competent lay staff were also appointed wherever needed, in order to reach out to more areas and carry out the work systematically.

In the course of time, new areas were explored and strengthened the existing ones with special focus on women. Along with Self Help Groups for women and men, all the Development Offices extended various other activities for women, youth and children such as Skill Trainings, Various Income Generating Activities, Formal and Non Formal Vocational Training Centers, Community Colleges, Adult Literacy Centers, Bridge Schools, Coaching Classes, etc. for the promotion of the priority groups.

Present scenario

Now there are 3,508 SHGs with approximately 46,600 members across the six provinces in 87 centers and 23 states. There are 95 full time and 33 part time FMA Sisters, 106 full time and 32 part-time lay staff working in the six provinces. Various other activities, development projects and programs are also carried out by the Social Development Coordinators (SDCs).

National Development Forum

The annual feature 'National Development Forum Meet' supported by COMIDE from 2000 gave a great push to social ministry. COMIDE played a major role in creating synergy in social ministry among the six FMA provinces in India and coordinating all the activities under the umbrella - the FMA National Development Forum (NDF).

The National meet held in 2008 in Bangalore gave a definite shape to the National Forum with clear cut vision, mission, strategies, statutes and action plan. All the six Social Development Coordinators (SDCs) under the guidance of Provincial Council of India (PCI) is all set to take over the social ministry to new realms to produce desirable results and make quality positive changes in the lives of women. Various

activities as capacity building training programs, seminars, workshops, etc. are planned to train the sisters and staff to face the present challenges which makes the lives of women more complex, posing new problem and concerns.

Future plans

Responding to the challenges of our times, FMA India as a united body would like to engage itself in accompanying the children, youth and women by

- Strengthening the National Development Forum to work towards a common goal thereby rendering quality service, expansion of the mission and creating visibility.
- Capacitating all the sisters and staff to work more efficiently and effectively face the emerging challenges in the social ministry.
- Creating National Thematic Networks of different sectors and concentrate more on women development and raise the quality of the masses of Indian women who are still waiting to break off various chains of enslavement.
- Utilizing all our skills and resources until the last, to empower every woman to stand upright with dignity and realise their rights.

Sr. Anna T

Sr. Anna T

Coordinator

National Development Forum

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
THROUGH
SELF HELP GROUPS
BY
FMA INDIA**

MUMBAI - INB



MUMBAI PROVINCE

A. General profile

- Name of the Province : St. Mary Mazzarello -Mumbai
- Name of the Social Development Office : Auxilium development office
- a) Name of the S.D.C : Sr. Magdeline Sequeira
- Address with pin code : Provincial Office
Post box: 19877
Bandra, Mumbai 400 050.
- b) Tel. No : (022) 26552797/26414225
- Mobile : +91 9930199402
- Fax : (022) 26552797
- Email : inbfmado@gmail.com
- c) Year of Establishment : 2000

Vision

Led by the Spirit of God and our Founders, we the Salesian Sisters of the Mumbai Province, motivated by compassion and love, vision a society where the disadvantaged and marginalized, particularly the young and women are empowered to live in dignity as active citizens, participating in the process of enjoying full human rights and sustaining the ecology and environment in solidarity, justice and peace.

Mission

We, the Salesian Sisters of the Mumbai Province, in solidarity with the vulnerable and marginalized communities – children, youth at risk, domestic workers, migrants, slum-dwellers, tribals/adivasis, dalits and landless labourers – be agents of social change, by advocacy and networking, for full human rights and for sustaining the ecology

and environment, so as to establish a just social order through integral education for a sustainable quality of life.

Service areas

- a) Number of states covered : 4 (Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra)
- b) Number of districts covered : Seventeen (17)
- c) Priority groups : Dalits, adivasis, tribals, fisherfolk, migrants, other poor
- d) Total number of beneficiaries approximate number (Category-wise) : 4,996

S.No	Beneficiaries	No
1	Dalits	2,773
2	Adivasis/Tribals	575
3	Fisherfolk	60
4	Migrants	80
5	Other marginalised	1,508
	Total	4,996

Main areas of intervention of the Social Development Office (SDO)

- ♦ Socio-Economic empowerment through committees,
- ♦ Self Help groups,
- ♦ IGPs - group and individual,
- ♦ Networking – GO and NGO linkages,
- ♦ Advocacy.

B. Details of Self Help Groups / Federation

- a) Year of starting : 2001
- b) Total Number of groups : 366

- c) Number of Women Groups : 362
 Number of Men Groups : 4
- d) Average number of members in a group : 10 - 20
- e) Frequency of meetings : Weekly
 Savings per month / Week Rs.
- f) Mode of saving : Weekly
- g) Total savings upto June 2009 : Rs. 1,86,83,167/-
- h) Total loans upto June 2009 :
 a) Internal loan : Rs. 1,43,55,952/-
 b) Bank loan : Rs. 57,60,615/-
 c) Loan given from centre :
 / or any other : —
- i) Schemes available / accessed from the government.
- Diocesan schemes such as CBDP (community-based disaster preparedness)
 - NABARD for agricultural and animal husbandry schemes,
 - NREGA (National Rural Employment Govt. Act),
 - NRHM (National rural health mission, where the health workers prepared by us are absorbed as government para-health workers for villages),
 - DRDA schemes,
 - WASMO – water and sanitation management project,
 - Housing schemes such as Indira Awas and Rajiv Gandhi Awas Yojna.
 - Indian Banks educational benefits given to SHG members through Insurance scheme,
 - SAHELII –NGO that gives free IGP training to SHG groups.
- j) Total number of people involved in IGP : 3500

k) Main type of IGPs :

- ♦ Farming,
- ♦ Cattle and other animal rearing,
- ♦ Food products/ house products production,
- ♦ Small scale business etc.

l) Number of SHGs linked

to Bank / Diocese /

Other organizations : Almost all

Federation

a) Do you have Federations

or equivalent bodies? : Yes

b) Number of federations

2

Members in the federations

: 960

c) Frequency of meetings

: Monthly

d) Total Number of SHGs

linked with Federation

: 62

e) The main objectives of Federation:

1. To promote good governance,
2. To enhance women empowerment and
3. To raise the standard of living.

f) Do you have common fund

for the federation? : Yes

The major activities of SHGs and Federation

Gathering women for meetings, saving money, organising training / awareness programs, organizing important religious and Social festival celebrations, taking up village or slum issues, helping solve individual problems of group members, accessing government and bank schemes and utilizing them, participating in dharnas, marches and rallies, involvement and participation in programs organized by panchayat, schools and our centres.

Federations try to avail the government schemes, work in collaboration with the Zilla, Taluka and local Gram Panchayats, provide better health facilities in collaboration with local PHC and government hospitals, encourage micro finance, promoting cultural, religious, social activities and preventing addiction, child marriages, child labour etc.

Awareness and training programs conducted for SHGs / Federation

a) Awareness Programme :Health

HIV/ AIDS

Anti Alcoholism

Religious harmony

Environment and Ecology

Peace and Harmony in the Family

Superstitious beliefs

Loan and repayment,

Government Schemes and linkages

b) Training Programme : Accounting skills

Leadership skills

Legal Education

Vision building

Wealth Ranking,

Concept of SHG for new members

Introduction to Federation

PRA

Food processing

Other related activities

Formation of

Committees

Village-wise

: Education, Health, IGP,

Anti Alcoholism, Peace building

The activities of the committees

1. Accessing government schemes and programs
2. Health awareness and help
3. Participation in village Gram Sabhas
4. Monitoring cleanliness of the village
5. Taking up basic rights issues
6. Helping to resolve conflicts and problems of the people.

C. History

In the year 1999, The FMA Provincial Council of India (FMA-PCI), at its meeting in Mumbai, entrusted the responsibility of convening the First National meet of FMA Social Development Offices to the Development Office of the Province of Bombay, INB. Accordingly this process was initiated by correspondence with COMIDE who had set up these Development Offices to function as professionally managed NGOs. On the advice of COMIDE, Mr. J.C. Anthony who is involved in development initiatives for the poor in many parts of the country was appointed as Facilitator and he assisted from the preparation to the concluding stages of the National Meet.

The First National DO Meet was held from 10-13 July 2000 at Mazzarello Youth Welfare Centre, Wadala, Mumbai, with Sr. Caroline Fernandes as Convener and presiding Provincial of the PCI, Sr. Aruna Castelino as organizer.

The Specific Objectives of this meeting were to arrive at a clearer understanding of the reality of the socio-economic situation in the country that has marginalized almost a quarter of our people to hereditary poverty and degradation, to review the responses of the Institute of the FMA to poverty alleviation and development of the poor and to plan strategies for intervention leading to their sustainable development, and above all to assist Development Offices evolve as

the professional arm of the Province, to assess, plan, co-ordinate and follow up development activities along professional lines.

Thus with the chief Resource person, Mr. Lourdes Baptista and Facilitator Mr. J.C Anthony the Province began the Participatory Strategic Planning Exercise with a series of awareness, training programs for sisters, animators, provincial councilors on the concept of Self Help, TOT, Book-keeping, health care management, social work methods and logical frame work, visioning, formation of a steering committee etc. The main thrust of the work geared towards: *Empowerment of Women and Youth using the Self Help Group Formation Strategy.*

In order to give an *organized response*, a structure of *Regional facilitation* was created in order to help the communities to generate a *community response* to the local situation, communities to come together to generate a *regional response* and the communities and regions to come together to generate a *province response*, and in future, if all the Provinces come together, a *national response* as FMA.

In 2004 Sr. Margaret Misquitta took over as the Social Development Coordinator of the province as she continued to do her best in training, assisting and monitoring various centres.

Today we have 12 active centers working towards Women Empowerment in the four regions of Goa – Gujarat – Karnataka and Maharashtra. We have about 366 SHGs with 5166 members. One of



our centres in Gujarat has formed committees to take care of the areas of Health – Human Rights – Advisory – and Review along with other 6 task force village groups of women in order that they utilize their empowerment in an integrated manner. Besides other

four centres have Groups registered, linked with Diocese, Banks, several government and non-government agencies gaining benefits for skill training, awareness, subsidies towards housing, sanitation, income generative activities, children's education, health needs, village and area uplift etc. Other centers are in the process of learning and growing in 'social ministry'.

As a province we would want to move from 'Empowerment of Women' towards 'Transformation of women and the society' wherein the people demand their rights and access the available resources utilizing their own capacity to achieve development for themselves and the society in which they live using all techniques of social intervention, including advocacy, lobbying, networking and campaigning.

D. Success stories

1. Income Generation Programmes

My children go to school today

Bebijan from Budersinghsi Village in Hubli Taluka of Dharwad District says: "I am a daily wage earner. When sisters came to my village to enquire about us, we were a little frightened because we had not seen people like them in our village. The SHG process was introduced to us. There was no unity



amongst the people of our village and there was no source of income other than that of working in the fields. So it was not very easy for me to join the group. After two weeks of constant visit by the sisters with much difficulty 15 women gathered and we formed a SHG group. There were lots of meetings to explain to us about the concept. We started saving Rs. 20 per week and subsequently opened a bank account. Then the internal loan-giving process started.

I had never taken even Rs.10/- from anybody in my life. When I saw the women in the group taking Rs.500/- or Rs.1000/- as loan, I used to get nervous. But at the end with much courage I took Rs.500/- and bought a goat and started to repay the loan little by little. When I realized that I had the potential to repay the loan my family also encouraged me. Till that time no body bothered about me. Today with lot of pride I can say that I have about 50 goats which I sell and carry on my living. My family status has come up. My children go to school. I am proud of what I am today.

- Bebijan

On the path of community development

'Prabhu-Krupa' group in Pansora, Gujarat have 20 members and all are Christians. All had been working as labourers in fields for daily wages. They would collect Rs.10/- in their weekly meetings and thus save Rs.40/- or 50/- per month. They used to find it difficult even to save that much, but within a year, as bank linkage was established, they courageously went ahead and took some land on lease with the loan that

they received and began to grow crops in every season. Formation of the group also helped them to work together in the land. Now they have not only repaid the loan but are also earning so much more. Growth and development of every family in the village is visible. They are very happy and grateful for the training, awareness, exposure and support that has set them on the path of development.

- From Prabhu-Krupa Group

2. SHG units

Pansora shows the way

In Pansora village alone we have 17 SHG groups comprising of various religions and castes. Hence the impact of the activities carried out jointly by these groups in the village is



great and visible to all. Recently the groups had taken up the task of cleaning up the village and evolved mechanisms to regularly clean. The Nirmal Gram Puraskar scheme of the central Government, Delhi came for a survey and awarded the village with rupees two lakhs. The Sarpanch, Mr. Mangalbhai Parmar who received it was happy and proud of our groups which had worked jointly for the good of the village. This has strengthened the groups, their unity and desire to move out and share their capabilities with the larger community.

Dream big!

Ujni Pimpalgaon village in Ahmednagar Maharashtra has three SHGs. The training, awareness and confidence that they gained as a group led them to take up water issues in their area. They mobilized the village and resources and built a huge tank, put up a motor-pump and have now regular water supply to their side of the village. They eagerly and regularly meet as a group and carry out the meetings methodically.



3. Dignified individuals

I can speak to a Bank manager without fear

Before I joined the group I was very shy and timid hence never came out of the house. My husband a heavy drunkard would not allow me to mix or



talk with anyone. Later when I joined the SHG and participated in group training programs, it changed my whole life. Now I

get full support from my in-laws and my husband does not stop me from going to the meetings. I can now speak to anyone even the bank manager without fear. I now help my husband in his small business which is growing now. My family respects me now and takes my opinion too. I am grateful to sisters for starting the group by which we have come out of our four walls and see a better tomorrow and education for our children.

- Sakira from Roshini Group, Karnataka

I am a staff of an Agricultural University

I am Vijaya representative of the Maha Laxmi group. I had not studied much because of poverty. After joining the SHG, I finished my X and XII standard through Karnataka Open school (KOS) at Don Bosco Sutgatti, and later became a Balwadi teacher. Then as SHG members we went to the Agricultural University for various training programs. There they selected me as a resource person to conduct programs in the villages. The uneducated girl, who used to be in the house doing only household work, can now address thousands of farmers in various villages. I am proud to say that I am a SHG member and a staff of the Agricultural University.

- Vijaya

E. Joy of working in social ministry

I have grown along with people

The day I got the news that I am going to work in the social field I was thanking God for the opportunity to work differently. Though at first I found it difficult to interact, soon I learnt by doing. House

to house visit and prayer helped me gain entry into the lives of people that needed support, awareness and help. Soon I began to see that my own troubles were nothing compared to those people who struggle every day and yet smile and even reach out to others. Working with people of different religions, castes and creed, their eagerness to come together to work towards development and their struggle to get over conflicts and differences helped me grow as a religious. Often, the cry of the people became my own cry to God, whose care and love I experienced as He did answer the many prayers of the poor and needy. I can truly say, through the people, the Lord has touched me and I have grown.



- Sr. Krupalata Pereira

My journey to Gujarat

Every journey has a goal and purpose. The most special phase of my life began when I became a nun in the congregation of Mary Help of Christians. Coming from a small town of Dharwad District, I was a simple timid girl. My self-confidence increased from a small incident which took place as a Novice. I take pleasure in narrating it. I was supposed to go to Ahmednagar for my mission experience for a month. When I went to say thank



you to Mother Provincial I told her the dream which I had the previous night. It was all about climbing a mountain and reaching Gujarat. This small dream was taken into consideration and my Mother Provincial changed her decision by afternoon. I was sent to a community in Gujarat. It became a sign for me of the type of mission God wanted me to be involved in.

After my profession I went back to Dakor, Gujarat and was made in charge of kitchen besides other works of the house which I carried out happily. Meanwhile I observed the sisters who went out to the villages and shared their experiences with people. It created in me a desire to go out with them. I prayed for this grace and soon my long awaited desire was fulfilled when I was allowed to join other sisters in the socio-pastoral ministry in the villages. I learned the knack of serving from the sisters who were working with love and dedication; they became my inspiration after Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello. I was given responsibilities which helped me to mature and grow so much so I never felt that I was only a junior in the community. I struggled with the language, but managed to learn it and helped the children, youth and other people of the villages in many small ways.

Later in two communities I was asked to care for the youth. Being a young person myself I was not confident in the beginning, but with the constant encouragement I received I was able to get the youth organized and made them active in the parish and deanery. Their acceptance and confidence in me helped me to build my skills as a guide and educator of the heart, mind and spirit.

Working with people, women and youth had many challenges for me. Today I have the joy of organizing them towards fruitful religious and socio-economic activities. I have grown in my capacity to relate with all types of people. The short courses have helped me in understanding various methods of working with people. When I see the women empowered to work out their own problems and needs, it brings me great joy and fulfillment in spite of the struggles in the communities. Today I am happy in my vocation, community life, and very happy with my mission. There is so much more to learn and improve even as I know that I can touch the hearts of the women and children in my own way. I keep updating myself reading a lot of books and pray each day for God's support and inspiration.

- *Sr. Elfina Rodrigues*

From meaninglessness to empowering lives

Sarojben a Roman Catholic, married to a Methodist, has 2 young boys and a helpful husband. Presently she is given the position of a supervisor of Kaira Social Service society, Ahemdabad and is monitoring the developmental works of the centre. Anyone meeting her, whether young or adult, high or low castes, marginalized or one having a high profile, are struck by her convincing conversations. They say, "What a change in this little village girl"! She herself cannot believe that from her hobby of collecting fire wood, now builds lives of individuals,



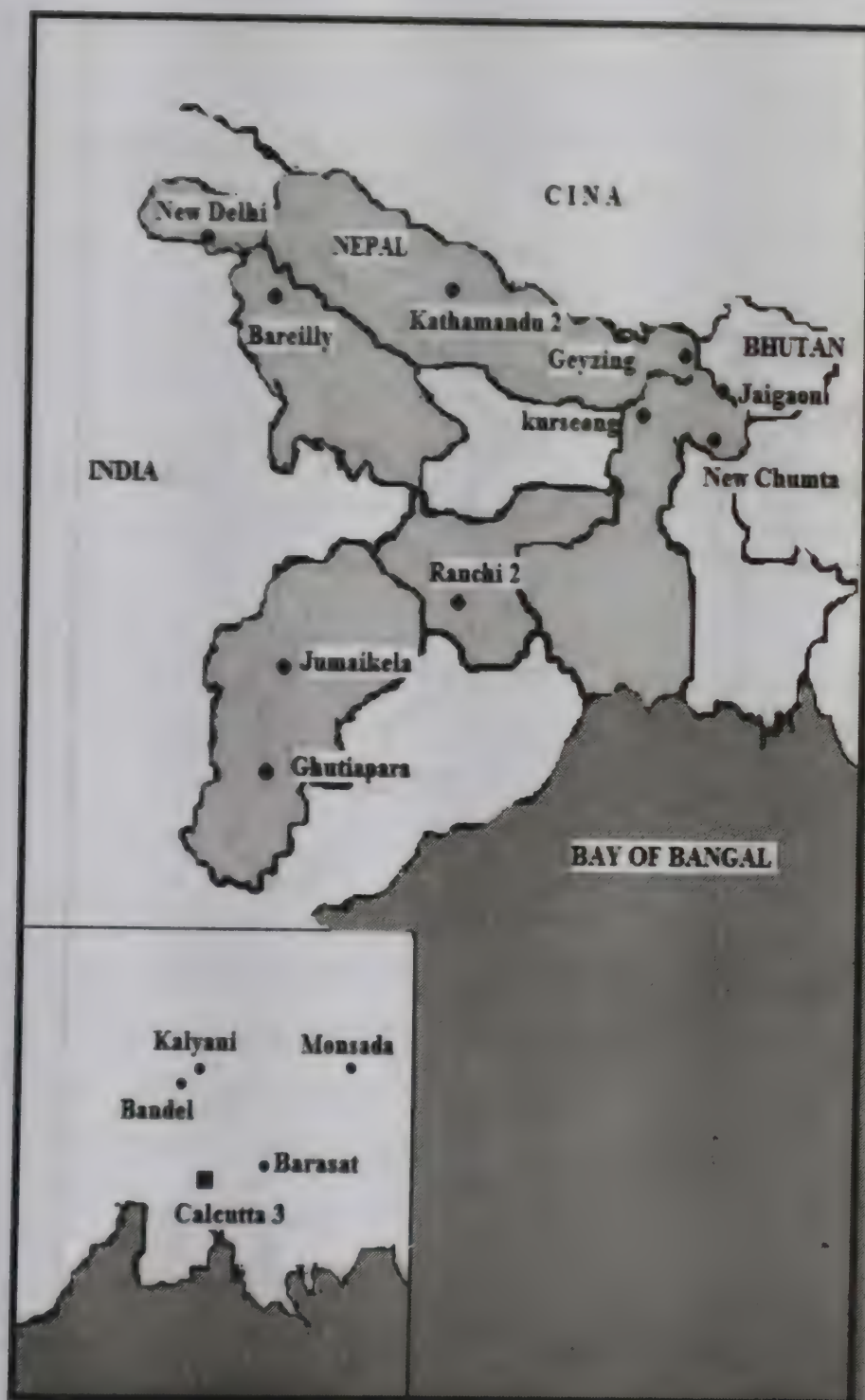
families and infrastructures of the villages. She was never allowed to be out by early evenings nor was she asked to talk in public. To silence her down, her parents shut her up in several boarding and married her soon after her secondary school studies.

Today she is a speaker on hard topics: gender disparity, leadership, conflict management and good governance. She also organizes youth, women and children to solve conflicts and build communal harmony. Regularly meets the government officials for village developmental support. Neither the number nor any sensitive crossroads of villages, or towns, stop her from imparting women to stand for their rights and dignity. Of late I heard her say, 'This Centre of the Salesian sisters, Pushpanjali, Dakor is dear to me and I shall serve it as long as I can to all the people in everyway I can'.

- *Sr. Lavita Vaz*

Province report prepared by
Sr. Magdeline Sequeira F.M.A
Social Development Coordinator
Mumbai Province - INB

KOLKATA - INC



KOLKATA PROVINCE

A. General profile

- Name of the Province : Mary Help of Christians, Kolkata.
- Name of the Social Development Office : Kolkata Salesian Development Society.
- a. Name of the S.D.C : Sr. Mary Puthuppallil
The Salesian Sisters
Development Office,
10P. K. Guha Road,
DumDum, Kolkata- 700 028,
West Bengal - India.
- b. Mobile : (0) 93393 52967
Fax : (033) 2590 1133
- c. Year of establishment : 1996
- d. Registration No. Year : S / 1 L / 20658, 17.03.2004.

Vision

We the FMA of Kolkata Province enriched by our diverse ethnic and cultural realities are called to empower the poor youth and marginalized women making them self-reliant, dignified and value oriented, capable of right judgment and free choice at the service of life and thus becoming protagonists and agents of social change in their environment.

Mission

The institute is

- Committed to the integral formation of young people that they may become good and honest citizens.

Aimed at empowering young people especially young women who have least chances of advancement and are most exposed to danger.

Intended to improve the socio-economic standard, of the poor and abandoned youth in and around our 23 communities.

Through a project aimed at promoting the development of the whole person by means of formal and non-formal education in their socio-cultural and political context.

In order to lead the young gradually to assume responsibility of their own choice and form themselves into persons capable of making right judgment and responsible choices.

Service areas

Number of states covered.	:	7 states and 2 countries.
Number of districts covered	:	20
Priority groups	:	Dalits, adivasis/tribals and migrants.
Total number of beneficiaries	:	Women – 5088

Details of Self Help Groups / Federation

SHG year of starting	:	1996
Neighborhood community	:	2008
Total number of groups	:	SHG - 266
Number of women Groups	:	266
Frequency of meetings	:	Monthly
Savings per month	:	Rs. 200/-
Mode of saving	:	Monthly

The major activities of the SHGs

Micro credit is the major activity among the SHGs. Along with this we help them in group formation and leadership training.

Awareness programs conducted for the SHGs

Training in leadership, HIV AIDS, tailoring and designing and personality development programmes are conducted.

C. History

In 1996, Sr. Margaret Ghosh initiated Self Help Group, gathering a group of economically backward women of Kalyani, having a monthly collection of Rs. 2. The journey carried on till 2002 and it was handed over to



Sr. Kusumam Kunnappilly. She gave a new shape to the group. The group found its place in different villages of Nadia district. The small tree took its shape by branching out to various centers in different districts. On 21st June 2008, the centers had been entrusted under the care of Sr. Mary Puthuppallil. The women empowerment sector is growing day by day. New members are joining in many places. Today the Province stands with six SHG centers, namely Kalyani, DumDum, Barasat, Bandel, Monsada and New Chumpta. The total number of beneficiaries are 5088 having a collection of Rs. 2 crores 55 lakhs. The women are encouraged in getting into micro projects such as sale of panipuries, sarees, ornaments, readymade garments, snacks, animal

husbandry and petty Shops. The empowered women are found to be ready to venture into new activities.

Introducing tailoring and designing center at Kalyani

On October 24th 2008, the center was inaugurated by Rev. Fr. Reymond Tudu. These are a special group of women who were unable to do their skill



training due to illiteracy and poverty. The center has found a new method of teaching them by simple plain stitching free of costs. The women were able to do it by themselves within three days. At present they have become experts in making ready made baby dresses and sell them at the local market.

A generous woman Mrs. Vani Gomes, was ready in lending a flat with minimum rent to start a showroom. Today the Province is proud of

having “Salesian Sisters Society Kalyani Women Empowerment Cell and Show room”. It was blessed on 24th of March and started functioning from 1st April. At present the center has 23 women earning their livelihood.



A model village

In the month of February, Sr. Francesca Ekka and Sr. Mary P visited Chestepur Village at the invitation of the villagers. Seeing the needs of the villagers the community planned to do something to help them to overcome their problems and difficulties. Many meetings and planning were done by the villagers with the help of the village head. The



members were divided into different groups of children, youth and adult. They brought out their needs of the area. The parish priest was invited to celebrate a thanksgiving mass by the villagers. Chestepur is growing as a model village.

Future plans

The Women Sector dreams of introducing SHGs in a few more of our communities by the end of 2010 and to extend IGP to all the existing Self Help Groups.

Success stories

Siraj Sheik brought joy in my life

I am new person being born again under the guidance of Auxilium Sisters, Sr. Mary P who is my saviour in this world of life. My first marriage was broken leaving me with three children and a very huge amount of debt to be paid. People showed me the easiest and shortest way of selling myself into the flesh trade. But my mother Mary gave me a ray of hope in the person Mr. Siraj Sheik, who became my second husband.



The life with him in the village was very tough. Everyone turned a deaf ear to my sorrow. Keeping my faith in God both me and my husband worked as a tailor and earned our livelihood. On 17th October 2008 I met Sr. Mary P the social worker, and I was invited to join her to begin a center for women. At present I am a main person in the organization of Suntree, and my husband is a good designer having 18 women under him to be trained. I thank God for the gift of this ministry entrusted by our Salesian sisters in Sonar Bengla. We dream ahead and grow in unity and have brought in new impetus within the family and in the society.

- Mrs. Rina Ekka

Give what you have freely received

I lost my son who was just 4 years old and the shock was eating me up. Worse still is that the villagers continually tortured me saying that I killed my son. Having lost my patience I attempted to commit suicide together with my daughter. The cry of my daughter reached the ears of the neighbors. The people came and saved



both us. Then the people informed the sister in social ministry about my plight. In no time Sr. Mary P reached my house and we started to walk in a new path. Today I am proud to serve in “Salesian sisters society women empowerment cell and showroom” in Kalyani.

I found happiness in increasing the number of women in our group for tailoring and make a decent living by earning money with our hard labour. We have built a very good group of women where we are able to share all our sorrows and happiness. Our children have hope for the future and we have a dream to fulfill. I am very grateful to the Salesian sisters for their tireless service in uplifting the poor women. I want to work and earn and give the extra to those who have less in life.

- Mrs. Rabina

E. Joy of working in social ministry

The poor - My first Love and last breath

'The poor' was my first love when I was 18. Today at 73 I can say that 'the poor' will be my last breath. I had been a missionary for 50 years in the North East India, M.P, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Bengal and Kolkata.



What struck a fiery note in my heart from my youth and still echoes today is: "I was hungry...I was thirsty...I was sick...I was naked"

In my first contact with the poor the talisman of Gandhi was an unfailing light. "Recall the face of the poorest and most helpless wo/man (women, child) and ask yourself if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him/her. Will s/he be able to gain anything by it? Will it help him/her to control over his/her own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead the poor to Swaraj?"

My contact with my beloved poor, especially women and children in the villages, has made me more human and more divine. The poor have filled me with dreams and given an audacity to walk the untried path, bare foot, despite the pain and suffering it incurred; They have increased my faith and made me see miracles; They have filled me with hope and courage in my darkest moments...telling me "God will not abandon His children; If I were to born again a hundred times, I would always choose to be with and like the poor.

- *Sr. Gemma*

The God of the poor

I consider reaching out to the poor, widow, children and the marginalized as a special call within me. The love of Jesus Christ has made me experience in my life that I am a child of God and more so today as a Salesian sister in the Kolkata Province. God's love for me was so immense that I was forced to go out of myself to share His love to the neediest of the society wherever I am placed.



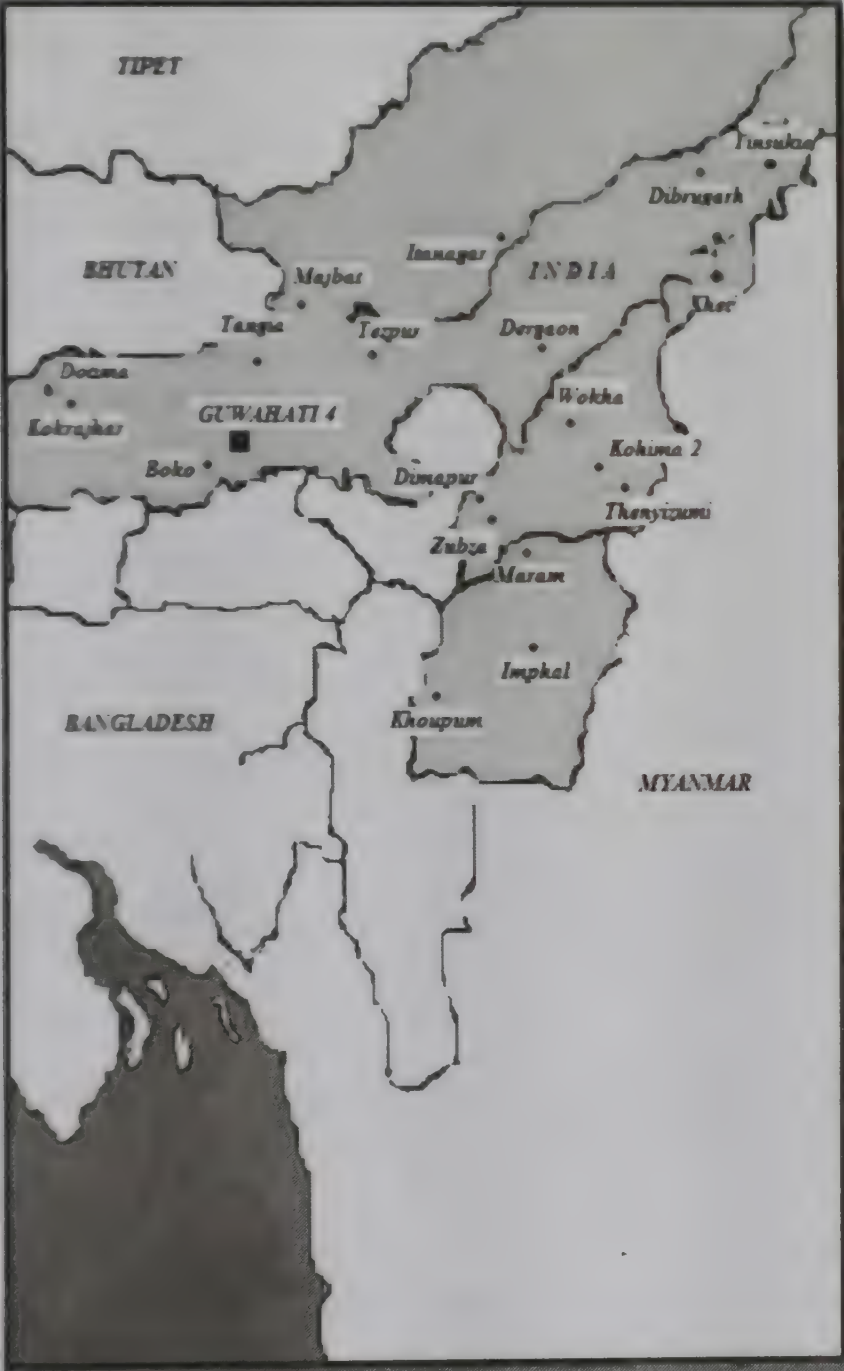
I am glad to tell Jesus that today through me He is being made known to many, especially the last and the least. In this journey I am not alone. I have been guided by my sisters, community and the people. I dream of doing something better in His own time for His people here on earth.

Today I am happy to have with me 33 single parented children 4 orphans and 21 poor children of the villages as boarders, a group of slum dwelling women of Kalyani railway line, a tailoring and designing center for 18 poor marginalized women and 3083 women as Self Help Group members. I am happy to be with them and I experience God in them. I salute all my loving sisters who are my guiding force in encouraging me to take up women empowerment mission in our province.

- Sr. Mary P

Province report prepared by
Sr. Mary Puthuppallil F.M.A.
 Social Development Coordinator
 Kolkata Province – INC

GUWAHATI - ING



GUWAHATI PROVINCE

A. General profile

Name of the Province	:	Mater Ecclesiae – Guwahati
Name of the Social Development Office	:	Human Empowerment and Development Center (HEDC)
a) Name of the S.D.C	:	Sr. Annie Inchenat
Address with pin code	:	Holy child School Krishnanag - Chandmari Guwahati - 781003 Assam.
b) Tel. No	:	(0361) 2656738
Fax	:	(0361) 2341691
Email	:	anniefma@yahoo.co.in
Mobile No	:	09435083732
c) Year of Establishment	:	2000
d) Registration number and year (If registered)	:	KAM/240/S/539 2003-04

Vision

We envision an informed and transformed community where everyone enjoys equality, social justice, respect and prosperity.

Mission

We, the HEDC FMA-ING, based on our call to serve, commit ourselves to enhance the life of people through well planned capacity building, organized community among people, networking with other agencies so that the community we serve becomes self- reliant, vibrant and confident, living in harmony with one another.

Service area

- a) Number of states covered : 4 states
- b) Number of districts covered : 16
- c) Who are the priority groups? : Tribals, women and youth
- d) Total number of beneficiaries : 6560
 - Men : 510
 - Women : 6050

Main areas of intervention of the Development Office

- Increasing literacy rate leading to better productivity and greater participation in daily life situations, decision and policy making process
- Building up their self worth and leadership qualities.
- Increasing the literacy rate among the young dropouts
- Increasing the knowledge about human rights.
- Improving the standard of their families.
- Creating awareness on dignity of women in the society.

B. Details of Self Help Group / Federation

- a) Year of starting : 2003
- b) Total Number of groups : 601
- c) Number of Women Groups : 550
 - Number of Men Groups : 51
- d) Average number of members in a group : 10 - 15
- e) Frequency of meetings : Monthly
- f) Nature of saving : Monthly
- g) Total savings upto June 2009 : 75,00,000/-
- h) Total loans upto June 2009 : 72,00,000/-
 - Bank : 27,00,000/-
 - SGSY schemes : 40,00,000/-
 - Other institutions : 4,60,000/-
 - Province : 40,000/-

- i) Any other schemes available /
accessed from the
government : NRHM, SKIP
- j) Total Number of people
involved in IGP : 4000
- k) Main categories of IGPs :
Setting up Shops
Animal husbandry
Weaving
Cloth making
Mushroom cultivation
Running small hotels
Fishery
Agricultural works
- l) Approximate income
from each category : Rs.1000 - Rs.1500
- m) Number of SHGs linked
to Bank / Diocese /
other organizations : 580 groups

The main activities of SHGs

- Saving
- Income Generation activities like mushroom cultivation, cultivation of crops, establishing shops, animal husbandry, weaving etc
- Internal loaning
- Availing land loan

Awareness and training programs conducted for SHGs / Federation

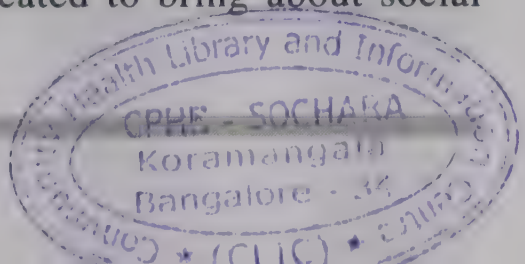
- a. Awareness programs : Health .
HIV/AIDS
Anti-alcoholism
Environment and Ecology
Land rights

	Peace Building RTI, Human rights, Skill training
b. Training Programme	Entrepreneurship Development Program Mushroom cultivation, Animal husbandry, Smokeless chula, Jute bag making, Bamboo craft, Cultivation of crops, Training on small scale business
c. Other Skills	Accounting skills Leadership skills Legal Education

C. History

Mater Ecclesiae Province of Guwahati was erected on 24 February, 2000 with Sr. Lucy Rose Ozhukayil as its first Provincial. With the erection of the new province, Human Empowerment and Development Centre began her saga of love and service, with particular attention to the four states of Northeast, namely, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, and Arunachal Pradesh. Sr. Alphonsa Kurisnikal was at the helm of the newly initiated organization which took a leap into the development and empowerment of the poor and the under privileged group of the society, especially the women and the youth.

To better endorse this process, Human Empowerment and Development Centre was totally dedicated to bring about social



transformation and economic development, especially of the backward communities of women and youth by providing them with knowledge and skills through education, skill training, capacity building and entrepreneurship that will make them economically self-sufficient. The purpose of HEDC is to increase the capacity of the people to participate at all levels of decision-making and in the community development activities, through networking and involving all stakeholders in a sustainable development towards balanced growth so that they become agents of social transformation. To meet this end, HEDC underwent 'Participatory Strategic Planning'. The communities, 23 coordinators and social workers of the extension branches of the centers along with the SDC and Programme Coordinator had carried out a detailed study at two different levels. The external scan prioritized peoples' needs and assessed their present living condition and their preparedness for developing alternate social, political and economic support systems to counter all forms of marginalization. The internal scan assessed the organizational strengths and weaknesses, future opportunities for development and threats, which hinder the process.

The outcome of the PSP process showed that the priority groups, women and youth were marginalized.

The areas of concern are:

1. Lack of educational facilities: both formal and non-formal, proper training facilities, training courses and trained staff.
2. Lack of sustainable and alternative systems of livelihood.

To tackle these issues, a common effective strategy was formulated in collaboration with the local communities, target groups and beneficiaries. We came to the conclusion that tribal and rural youth, women and school dropouts from the villages and cities must be empowered socially, economically and politically through non-formal education, formation of self help groups, income generation project

and market oriented skill training workshops and exposure visits to important markets, export centers etc.

Good number of skills training and capacity building programme for women were implemented by the different centers of HEDC. The skill training programme consists of short term training modules, medium term modules and long term modules.

Short-term training programmes: Mushroom cultivation, vermin compost, cultivation, food processing and animal Husbandry

Medium term training programme: Computer and weaving and craft

Long term training programmes: Tailoring and embroidery

Most of them have a bank linkage, revolving fund, and micro finance. From time to time we conduct gatherings of the women in order to impart regular training with the help of competent resource persons at the block level, DRDA, bank etc. During these gatherings, sessions are conducted on topics related to health, education, capacity building programme, skill development training, eradication of alcoholism, legal aids, land rights, income generation activities, panchayati raj institutions, right to information etc. Following are the social impact of the programmes:

- Women have come to know of their rights and responsibilities
- They have learnt to deal with the officers.
- They have realized the value of education.
- They have learnt to sign instead of giving thumb impression
- Family standard has improved
- Children are sent to schools in both English and Vernacular medium.
- Many groups are getting revolving fund from the DRDA
- They have learnt to live together with dignity in the society

- They trust each other and they have self confidence.
- They have learnt to network with other organisations
- The men have reduced and stopped drinking habits.

Future plans for women empowerment

- Strengthening the existing SHGs
- Tapping Government Schemes
- Strengthening the TVET Centers by updating the courses
- Organizing free legal aids camps
- Self employment through IGP
- Creating an entrepreneurial centre – production cum training with marketing facilities.

Achievements and awards received

Sr. Elizabeth Edatukarn is receiving an award from the Government of Karnataka for the best social service ministry rendered in the North East.



She was also awarded in 1984 by the then President of India Mr. Zail Singh for the meritorious service rendered in the field of Health.



D. Success stories

1. Income Generation Programmes

We have Land, Pond and Houses

The Trisnajyoty SHG group was formed in February 23rd 2007. It consists of 12 members at Koilaghat village, Dergaon. Majula Kolita is the president.

Under the leadership of the president and the secretary of the group and the supervision of Sr. Eliza Minj, the coordinator, the group started functioning with 12 members. Bank



account was opened in the State Bank of India Dergaon Branch with Rs.1000/- on April 13th 2007.

The group started their saving of Rs.10/- per week. After two and a half years, the saving with interest for the internal loaning

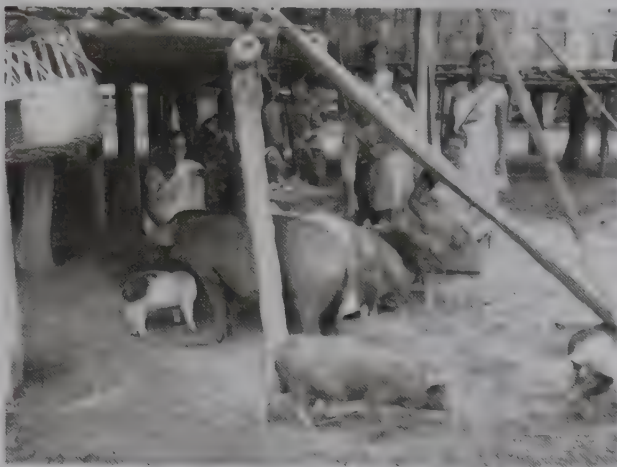
among the members became Rs. 25,000 together with a revolving fund of Rs. 10,000/- The members took up agriculture and fishery. Then they began cultivating the



seasonal crops like vegetables and paddy. From the cultivation, they made an income of Rs. 14,000/- a year. From their savings they managed to purchase a piece of land for fish rearing. All the members worked very hard to move the government officials to help them. Now the Trisnajyoti SHG group has the land for cultivation and fish pond of their own. The group gets a regular income from the fishery and cultivation to the tune of Rs. 22,000 – 25,000 in a year. The members are able to rebuild their dilapidated houses. The children are having better education and they have better image in the society. This group became an example to many other SHGs. It is our joy to have such a successful group.

Where there is will there is way

Doni Polo SHG was formed on 16th May 2005 with 15 female members. All the members are from very poor families. They have started their corpus with individual monthly



deposit of Rs.40/- On 13th July 2005 the bank account was opened. The first year saving was Rs. 25,000/-

Grading was done by DRDA and the group was qualified to receive the revolving fund of Rs.10,000/- The group had utilized the fund in internal lending and for their personal needs.



The group had regularly paid their loan installments. And once again the group was qualified to receive a subsidy of Rs. 1,50,000 from DRDA. The group has started piggery. Now their annual income is Rs. 45,000/- and have built up the capacity to repay the loan.

2. SHG units

A successful cultivation of paddy led by non-literate women

We, the Kripa SHG were formed in the year 2004 with 11 members and all of us are non-literate. We decided to save Rs. 10/- per head every week. After two years we decided to cultivate paddy. With the agreement of the members of our group Mrs. Antonia Topno as its leader got a piece of



land on lending terms from the village for Rs.10,000- for a period of five years.

We purchased seeds from the market and began the cultivation by ourselves. The net profit

for the first year was Rs. 5000/-. The following year the net profit went upto Rs. 8000/-

We were not given any support from any other sources. It is only our saving, hard work and unity that brought success in this income generating process. We hope to increase our net profit every year.



How to effectively tap the government resources?

We are from the village of Sonabheel, Tezpur, uneducated and unemployed. We have many economic hardships and

problems. We heard about the SHG and Sisters of St. Joseph Convent helping people in running the SHG. Therefore we



invited Sr. Flora to our village who helped us with various information. Under the leadership of Mrs. Lucia Kandulna a group with 15 members was formed in the name of Depanjuli on 6th May 2004.

We decided to collect Rs. 10/- per week per head. In this way we began a credit system. After six months of the formation of the SHG, the block officials and bankers did a grading exercise and our



group was qualified for getting revolving fund. The block sanctioned an amount of Rs. 15,000/- as revolving fund for our group in 2006 and it strengthened our corpus fund. We, the members of the group could take loan for some minor activities such as small business, piggery and goatery. After six months another grading exercise was done by the block and the bankers and our group was qualified to Grade II and the block had sanctioned Rs. 22,000/- Once again we did our own income generating activities. For the third time we were qualified to get another subsidy. At present the members of our group are successfully generating self-employment through different kinds of activities. At present the monthly income of members of our group is Rs. 2500/.

3. Dignified individuals

My dream is realized

I am Miss. Biju Das, one of the trainees of Maria Nivas Training center, Dergaon. The center provided me with different training programmes such as garment making, embroidery, tailoring, jute bag making, mushroom cultivation etc. I



was very much interested in all the activities given by the center in particular, cutting and tailoring. My aim was to be a good tailor. And this programme enabled me realize my aim. It is all because of the help given to me by the sisters and teachers of Maria Nivas center. Today I can say that I have become a mistress for the trainees and many other NGOs have invited me to train other young women like me. At present I am earning around Rs 4,000/- a month, which is a big sum for any one of my standard. Thanks to the Maria Nivas Training Center.

Wedding crowns and garlands for sale!

I am Salomi Surin, hailing from Rupkuria village, Sonitpur District. I had many financial difficulties in my family. After my training in Tezpur, St. Joseph's Convent, I was inspired to better my living standard by starting a shop of my own but the family problem made my endeavour unsuccessful.



But I was not discouraged. I met some of my friends who helped me to open a small tailoring shop. With much effort and struggle I made myself successful. Now I am doing well. The shop is open from 9 a.m. to 5p.m. I gain at least Rs.200 to Rs.300 a day. Besides stitching I even train other girls in cutting, stitching and embroidery. I make wedding crowns and garlands. In this way with creativity and hard work I progress day by day.

E. Joy of working in social ministry

I thank my God

I was Hungry and you fed me
I was thirsty and you gave me to drink
Whenever you did this for one of the least
important of these brethren of mine you did
it for me. (Mtt 25: 35-36, 40)



I was given a chance to become a nurse through nursing training in Ganesh Das Hospital in Shillong. My aim of becoming a religious sister was that I should do something to bring as many people as possible to Jesus. Through health ministry I served the people in need and that enabled me to carry out more effectively the message of the teaching of Jesus Christ cited above.

I began my health ministry in a hospital and neighboring villages in 1956. In the beginning I found myself very timid, shy and unable to face and communicate with people. I was a silent worker but was available for any help, any where to all who were in need. But I preferred to work alone therefore I avoided group discussions, meetings, sharing of ideas and opinions, reading in public, even to introduce myself in a group etc. Gradually I realized that if one has decided to do as much good as possible in one's life then it is necessary to involve people for whom one serves in the society. Therefore slowly through prayers and efforts I overcame my shy nature. Through the intervention of our Lord Jesus I found that my weaknesses bit by bit turned altruistic and I was able to face people. I also experienced that a force was leading me to take up services, which directly helped the people to alleviate themselves from their miseries to a hopeful state. I found that once I started working for the needy people, a lot of energy and enthusiasm flowing into me and so difficulties and problems could not prevent me from getting involved in the social needs of the people. I learnt to involve the people in planning and implementation of all activities.

I began approaching the government officials and private sectors to find out ways and means available for the welfare of the people for whom I served. I started getting invitations to take part in social events, Government programmes and rallies, social festivity celebrations, youth and women programme, even death anniversary of Government officials etc. I was asked to give messages in the celebration of those events. I realized that the more one is available for the social service mission the more one enjoys fulfillment, satisfaction, acceptance, respect and influence. People recognized the benefit of the service rendered.

In 1984 I was given the presidential award for the assistance given in relief services to the ethnic violence stricken people in Assam and Meghalaya. In 2000 I was recognized for the outstanding social service rendered in the field of health in North East India by the North East Catholic Health Association (NECHA) and the regional branch of Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI). In 2004 I was selected by the people for peace award as one among thousand Peace women across the Globe. All these recognitions show that I was receiving abundant blessing from God. Today I am no more an isolated person. I have many friends, well-wishers, benefactors, recognition from the government and non-government officials, religious leaders, pupils, past pupils and people from different walks of life.

There were many difficulties and hurdles that I came across in the journey of this ministry. I had to face challenges: First of all I had to overcome my own weaknesses. Secondly I found lack of understanding within the community as some

could not understand social work. I had spent sleepless nights to bring about a change in the mentality of the people for whom I served. During ethnic violence I underwent dangers and untold difficulties, but I never gave up. One thing is sure that I did not discriminate anyone in my service. I offered my service to all people without making a difference between caste, creed, colour, rich, poor, literate, illiterate, age, sex, sick and healthy because all are the children of the same Father and for everyone of us Christ came to the world.

For the past 53 years I have been involved in various social ministries in diverse needs among the poor and the needy in North East. It was on 7th July 1956 that I arrived at Guwahati with the aim of bring people to Christ. I am now happy to have come all the way to the North East Region and finally reached Arunachal Pradesh to continue this noble mission among the neediest. I thank the Lord for selecting me as a blunt instrument in His service. Praise the Lord.

- Sr. Elizabeth Edattukaran

I stayed with the people and listened to them

I am happy to share the experiences of my missionary activities in the field of social ministry. In 2003 in the month of November I was sent to start the social ministry at Maria Nivas Convent Dergon in Golaghat District, Assam. It is a new centre and I was new to everything and to everyone. The people of the



area consisted of Assamese, Bhamins, Scheduled Caste Assameese, Mishings - the plain tribals living on the bank of River Brahmaputra. There were also Muslims and the tea tribals in the tea garden. People depended on cultivation for their livelihood, and other times they also went for daily wage work in the better off families in the area in order to sustain their families. They were very poor economically, educationally and in their social living. In the villages, community hygienic living and drinking water facility was very poor. Mother and child care was very poor due to which mortality rate in the area was very high.

Studying the above issues and the background of the people I was compelled to intervene in the community upliftment. I was inspired to help the rural poor and the backward brothers and sisters by means of SHG formation especially the women groups, so as to empower them in the society and in the family. In order to take up the activities I started doing the survey work with my helpers from house to house and village-to-village. As I was moving around, some Hindus opposed me suspecting conversion. It was for the first time that they had seen a religious sister or a Christian. The inhabitants of Dergaon town or the villages were only Hindus, and their culture and way of living was different from other Assameese. The Mishings had a different culture.

It was very difficult for me to work with them because of very poor cooperation. I took up the work as a challenge. I told myself that if it is God's work, He would help me. With deep faith and courage I went ahead mingling with the people. I shared their lives by staying in the villages, visiting, talking and listening to them. I started teaching them. Slowly people

started listening to me. There was a group of people who threatened me saying that with your white dress you cannot enter the villages. Obviously I looked like a stranger for the villagers. They observed me very closely. In all their harshness I had no fear in my heart. Finally my work started stabilizing among women in each family. In their journey I was there with them in the offices, banks and in meeting persons from top officials to simple people. God intervened in my life and that of the villagers and the situation gradually changed. People understood the sincere love and goodwill that I had for them and they could see the good that was being done to them. Many people from the backward villages approached me with an invitation to come to their villages. Soon we had covered 30 villages with 148 SHG groups. In order to create the income generating activities for the SHG members and the villagers we had conducted a lot of orientation and training programmes.

Today about 75% of women are having their own farm for animal rearing among the Mishing community. The members are earning Rs. 25,000 to 30,000 every 6 months from their own piggery farm. Assameese SHG members are having their own unit of fashion designing or weaving or fishing earning Rs 800 to 1000/- a month. Among them there are few educated women who are attending short courses on computer and getting jobs in offices. Thus many are becoming source of income to their families. Above all the women in general are bringing a great change in their families and in the community. Today the women are no longer under the control of their husbands as the women are also earning. They are also raising their voices to any injustice done to them and are able to fight for their rights.

- Sr. Eliza Minj

Accompanying Adivasi women for a better future

I, Miss Susanti Chandiguria, have been working for the past two years mobilizing the villagers to form SHG under the guidance of sisters from St. Joseph's Convent, Tezpur. I joined this work in 2007 and was working among the adivasis (tribals) in 14 villages, having 60 Self Help Groups. All the SHGs are having bank linkages and revolving fund. In the beginning it was very challenging to organize the members of the adivasi community. I faced mainly two difficulties. First of all it was very difficult to call them for a meeting, as they had no time. Throughout the week they go to work in tea gardens. Sunday is the only rest day in which they generally go for marketing. Moreover the villages are scattered. So it required house-to-house visit. Secondly people were suspicious on the motive behind our meeting. Sometimes they suspected us of conversion to Christianity or sometimes they even thought that we would take their savings and run away.



Being an adivasi and knowing the language of the people I could tackle the problems and win over their confidence by making frequent visits and talking to them. My only aim was the upliftment of the poor adivasi women. From time to time I conducted training programmes by gathering the women with the help of our sisters and expert resource persons in order to impart knowledge.

Forming and animating the Self Help Groups for women energized everyone. As for me, it has become a source of joy and strength to see the poor and the marginalized women becoming persons with self-confidence displaying unity and strength. For the women themselves, it has enlightened their minds, opened up their vision, increased their knowledge and filled them with power to face various challenges in their lives.

- *Miss. Susanti*

Province report prepared by

Sr. Annie Inchenat F.M.A.

Social Development Coordinator

Guwahati Province / ING

BANGALORE - INK



BANGALORE PROVINCE

A. General profile

- Name of the Province : Sacred Heart of Jesus,
FMA – INK
Bangalore
- Name of the Social
Development Office : Centre for Development and
Empowerment of Women
Society (CDEW)
- a) Name of the S. D.C : Sr. Anna Thekke
- Address with pin code : Salesian Sisters, Bandapura
Virgonagar P.O,
Bangalore – 560 049
Karnataka State, South India
- b) Telephone No : 080–28472784
- Fax : 080–28472525
- Email : cdewfma@gmail.com
- c) Year of Establishment : 1993
- d) Registration number
and year : Registered in 2005
Reg No.BLU–S881–2005 – 06

Vision

With the marginalized towards fullness of life

Mission

Building up a caring society around us where love, brotherhood, solidarity, peace, economic advancement and empowerment of women are nurtured

Service areas

- a) Number of states
covered : 3

- b) Number of districts covered : 16
- c) Priority groups : Dalits, Tribals, Fisher folk, Farmers.
- d) Total number of beneficiaries : 1,00,000

Empowerment strategies

Empowerment through five-fold strategies:

- Formation of local organizations and federation
- Education
- Economic advancement
- Holistic health
- Enhancing decision making capacities

3. Details of Self Help Groups / Federation

- a) SHG Year of starting : 1993
- b) Total number of groups : 669
- c) Number of women groups : 663
- Number of men groups : 6
- Total members : 8592
- d) Average number of members in a group : 10 to 15
- e) Frequency of meetings : Weekly
- f) Savings per Week : Rs. 10/- to 20/-
- g) Mode of saving : Weekly
- h) Total savings upto June 2009 : Rs. 2, 23, 32,953/-
- i) Total loans upto June 2009 : Rs. 3, 43, 94,768/-

a) Internal loan & Bank loan	:	Rs. 3, 43, 94,768/-
c) Loan given from centre or any other:	:	-
Revolving fund	:	Rs. 2, 60,000/-
j) Any other schemes available /		
Accessed from the govt?	:	Nil
k) Number of SHGs linked to Bank /		
Diocese/Other organizations?	:	669
l) Total No. of People involved in IGP	:	6130

Main categories of IGP

Sl. No	Name Of IGP	No. People involved	Approximate Income Per month
1.	Small business as selling readymade garments, vegetables, tender conconut, fast food, provision store, coin phone.	1600	1000/- to 2000/-
2.	Agriculture	1000	800/- to 1000/-
3.	Rabbit rearing	1000	800/- to 1500/-
4.	Animal husbandry as goat, cow, buffalo	800	1000/- to 2000/-
5.	Tailoring	750	1000/- to 1500/-
6.	Poultry	250	300/- to 500/-
7.	Fishing	100	3500/- to 4000/-
8.	Fish vending	200	2500/- to 3000/-
9.	Preparation and sale of different kinds of pickles and fried food	175	800/- to 1200/-
10.	Preparation of various types of detergents	100	300/- to 500/-
11.	Petty Shop	50	1000/- to 1500/-
12.	Mushroom Cultivation	50	500/- to 800/-
13.	Paper plate making	35	500/- to 800/-
14.	Paper bag making	20	300/- to 500/-
	TOTAL	6130	

Federation

- a) Do you have Federations? : Yes
- b) Number of Federations : 22
Members in Federations : 754
- c) Frequency of meetings : Monthly
- d) Total Number of SHGs linked with Federation : 669
- e) The main objectives of the Federation
- To evaluate the functioning of SHGs and Contribute to its growth.
 - To solve the disputes & conflicts in SHGs between individuals and other groups
 - To help the SHGs avail government schemes and monitors its utilization.
 - Share the experiences and mutual enrichment and new learning's.
 - To organize collective social action based on community development / or to achieve basic needs
- f) Do you have Federation Common Fund? : Yes

The major activities of SHGs and Federation

Self Help Groups

- Weekly meetings
- Savings and credit
- Income Generation activities to enhance family income
- Acquire new knowledge through various awareness programs
- Collective Social activities
- Capacity and skills development of individual members.
- To work towards achieving the vision and mission

Federation

- Monthly meetings of representatives from the member SHGs
- Resolving any conflicts that may arise in member SHGs
- Linkage of member SHGs to government schemes
- Sharing of new knowledge and experience, insights with members of SHGs
- Collective social interventions

Awareness and training programmes conducted for SHGs / Federation

- a) Awareness Programme
 - Health
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Anti-alcoholism
 - Environment and Ecology
 - Water preservation
 - Peace and Harmony in the Family
- b) Training Programme
 - 1) Preparation of various detergents
 - 2) Organic farming
 - 3) Food processing
 - 4) Tailoring and Embroidery, handicraft
 - 5) Rabbit rearing
 - 6) Animal husbandry
 - 7) Agriculture
- c) Other Skills
 - a. Leadership skills
 - b. Legal Education
 - c. Accounting Skills

Committees

Number of Committees: 5 committees

- 1) Education
- 2) IGP
- 3) Health
- 4) Anti-alcoholism
- 5) Peace

Activities of the Committees

Education committee: Promote education at all levels and primary education for all in particular and prevention of drop-outs and child labour

Health committee: Ensure cleanliness of the village and surrounding areas, and promote holistic health in the family and society

IGP committee: Follow up all the IGPs in their area and extend timely guidance to make it sustainable and profitable.

Anti-alcoholism committee: Fight against alcoholism and drug addiction and motivate and mobilize the community to arrest and prevent these evils.

Peace committee: Assist to solve the conflicts that arise in the family and village tactfully and promote peace and harmony.

All the committees meet once a month

C. History

Social ministry began to spread its wings in the province from 1993, when the veteran Sr. Nancy Pereira started development activities in the slums of Ulsoor and in the surrounding 10 villages of Bangalore by forming Self Help Groups. This marked an era of shift from charity to development. It resulted in the birth of FIDES (Family Integral Development Education Scheme). FIDES has its focus on the holistic development of families. The hard work of Sr. Nancy and her team of dedicated staff brought out radical changes in the lives of the people of Ulsoor by way of healthy living, improved housing and sanitation, financial enhancement through savings and credit, skills training and sustainable income generating activities. As the SHGs are now self manageable, the program is handed over to the people and FIDES functions as a resource centre for Ulsoor and villages. In 2005 FIDES adopted another slum in Kaveri Nagar with 1500 families and the mission is continued.

Centre for Development and Empowerment of Women Society (CDEW)

In the same year, 1993, CDEW was constituted as the official social action organ of the FMA – INK province. From 1993 to 2002 CDEW

had carried out various developmental activities which focused mainly on education and strengthening of various centers of the province. From 1996 onwards, participation in the annual Development centres meeting gave encouragement, new knowledge and support, which made development sector grow with the guidance and support of COMIDE.

Participatory Strategic Planning (PSP)

The PSP process initiated by COMIDE during 2000 – 2001 emanated new light and opened new dimensions in social ministry. It shed more enlightenment on the situations of the people, especially women around each centre, target area, priority groups, their needs and requirements. Thus a new vision and mission emerged in the developmental sector in the province. It made people partners in the development programmes, its planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. CDEW was mandated to carry out the various plans that emerged from PSP workshop.

Beginning and growth of Self Help Groups

During the year 2003, Self Help Groups (SHG) were initiated in the 11 centers of the province in 2 states, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. Slowly and steadily it began to grow and spread. Today there are 17 centers (7 in Andhra Pradesh, 5 in Kerala and 5 in Karnataka) with 669 SHGs and 8592 members.

During these years, a number of SHG women had emerged as leaders of local government. Thousands of women and their family members have gained knowledge, courage and confidence and increased their social and cultural status to stand on public platforms fearlessly and to fight for their rights and basic needs. Their income level has improved considerably and so their health, food habits, medical care, housing and quality of life.

Their involvement in the community activities had also increased and their collective social action had produced many positive results in the

villages. Some of our centers are now functioning as resource centers since the SHGs units have become self-reliant.

CDEW has its head quarters in Bangalore with a team of professionals including 2 full-time sisters and 3 lay staff. At the regional level there are 3 Regional Coordinators, 8 full-time and 16 part-time sisters and 23 lay collaborators working as community organizers, in the 17 centers.

Future plans

Our plan is to

- Strengthen the federations further and through them to build up strong self manageable SHGs.
- Take up new areas and start more SHGs.
- Enhance the IGPs to make them sustainable and create a marketing network locally and at the regional level.
- Initiate family life education and offer counseling facilities to women and families to reduce the increasing number of divorces and create peaceful, happy and value based families.
- Continue legal education in Human Rights, Fundamental Rights, Women's and Children's Rights, etc.

Linkage with NGOs, HR Organizations and Government

CDEW is linked to a number of secular and faith based organizations at different levels

- Various banks and Government departments
- Diocesan Social Service Societies
- Balavika, Jeevan Sadan in Andhra Pradesh,
- ATMATA Kendram, ACCEPT, TRADA in Kerala,
- Adhwana, Bosco Child Line, SAKHI, CALL
- Hoskote Mission Hospital Bangalore in Karnataka

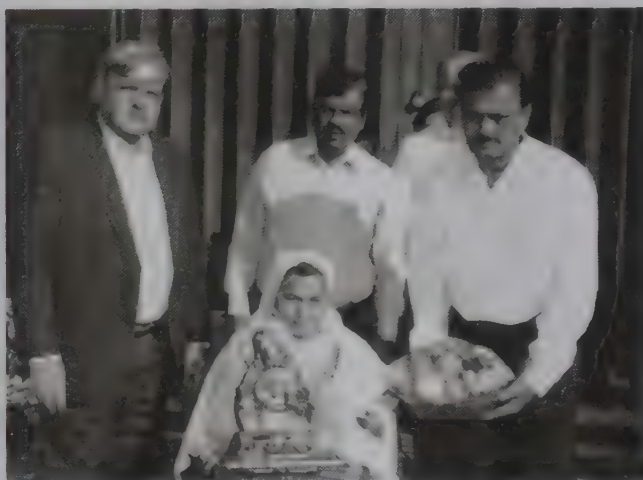


Achievements and awards received

Sr. Nancy Pereira received 8 International awards for her outstanding contributions to the humanity by her genius and creative development activities. She

received the prestigious Golden Apple Award from Italian Government on 21st March 1998

Sr. Annakutty received an award from the Canara Bank in 2008 for her yeomen services rendered to the young at risk, at Bangalore.



D. Success stories

1. Income Generation Programmes

I own a garment industry!

I am C.H. Kalyani, a member of Sai Laxmi Self Help Group affiliated to the Salesian Sisters, under Auxilium Akhila Vikas Women Development Centre, Ongole, Andhra Pradesh. We are 10 members and our group is 6 years old. Before affiliating to Auxilium our only concentration was to make more money through various ways.

Collaborating with Auxilium brought great transformation in us, as we have learned many values and leadership skills. The mission of CDEW “Building up a caring society around us

where love, brotherhood, solidarity, peace, economic enhancement and women Empowerment are nurtured” is deeply instilled in us.

We understood clearly that it is our duty to enter into the social problems of our neighborhood to create a peaceful and just society. As I was interested in tailoring I learnt it



well and started stitching at home. In 2005 Sr. Veronica Gali, Directress, Auxilium Women Development Centre, Ongole, invited me to teach tailoring at Auxilium Centre which I readily accepted. It was a great experience to work with Salesian Sisters as a tailoring teacher. While teaching, I learnt many values and imparted the same to the students. It was part of my mission to see that every trainee gets a job or start her own self employment. There I had the joy of seeing many girls starting their own small business and slowly a dream began to grow in me to start my own garment production centre. Sisters and my group members encouraged me and helped me to fulfill my desire. With a loan Rs. 3 lakh taken from my SHG and Rs. 3 lakh taken as bank loan I started a garment production centre in 2008. Initially I trained 5 girls and equipped my shop with necessary machines and furniture. As a next step, I trained 15 women and gave them cut clothes to stitch. Now each of them are earning Rs.150/- to Rs.300/- per day.



I have also employed 2 men, one for marketing and another for ironing and packing the garments. I am earning an average income of Rs.10, 000 every month after meeting all my expenses.

Some Parishes and Panchayaths have invited me to start production centers to provide employment for the

women. My future plan is to open a production centre in my village, to provide regular work and income to many women like me and empower them to stand on their own. My staunch supporters are my SHG members, husband and 2 children and the Sisters of Auxilium, Ongole. I owe my profound gratitude to all of them.

- C.H. Kalyani

Livelihood brings dignity

My Name is Thresiamma; I am a member of Navajeevan Auxilium Women Development Centre, Kanakakunnu, Idukki District, Kerala. Kanakakunnu is an interior hilly village located in the high ranges. Agriculture is our main occupation. But it no more yields good income due to various reasons. Adverse climate, low price, over use of pesticides, etc have contributed

towards low productivity, which resulted in unemployment, debts, illness, fights and suicides. But God sent his love and mercy upon us in the form of Salesian Sisters who established a women development centre in our village, which has given us new hopes and answer to many of our problems.

Hard pressed with debts and no source of any income the life of my family became miserable. Becoming a member in the SHG started by the Salesian Sisters

was my first step to success. Various awareness programs and trainings on income generation activities given by the sisters and community organizers helped me to gain confidence and to equip myself with knowledge and skills.

The internal and other loans provided helped me to buy a cow, start rabbit rearing, mushroom cultivation and a kitchen garden from where I get regular income and sufficient vegetables for my family. My free time is now bringing me income and it gives me peace of mind, happiness and satisfaction.

Now I have an average monthly income of Rs. 3000/- from the sale of milk, cow dung, rabbits and mushroom. My husband and children help me in my work and we are now more united.

All the needs of my family are now met without borrowing or depending on money lenders. My profound gratitude to God



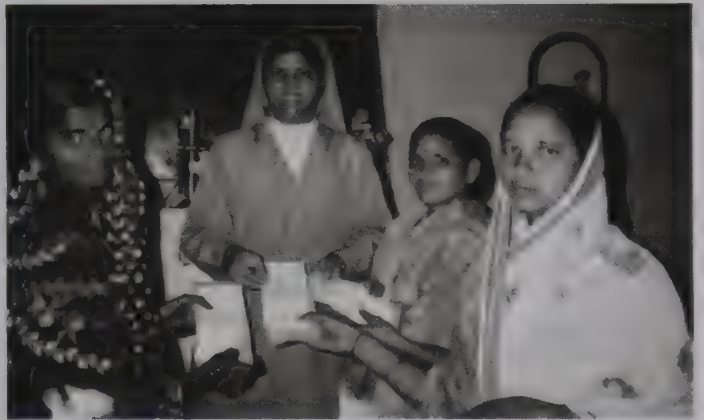
almighty and to Auxilium Women Development Centre for its timely support in rescuing our lives from deprivation and difficulty and leading us to a hopeful future and for opening our eyes to see the brighter sides of life. Thanks to Sr. Teresa Rani the Good Samaritan in our lives.

- Thresiamma

2. SHG units

Unity is our strength

We are a group of ten women Nazreen, Mehthaj, Beegum, Kottamma, Shehanaj, Thiruppathamma, Saithabi, Rehmath, Shahina and Nazzema. Ours is a great example of unity in diversity. As our names indicate, we follow different religions, but we are all united and strong despite diverse identities. We came together in 2004 and formed Sulthan Bee SHG group under the guidance of Auxilium Akhila



Vikas Women Development Centre, (AAWDC), Ongole. From the very first month, we learnt that it was our duty to create a home and neighbourhood where love, fraternity, solidarity and peace are to be cherished by everyone. We were slowly empowered with knowledge and skills to lead our lives with dignity and self respect. All the guidance and support towards this was given to us by AAWDC.

Our weekly meetings were times of frank sharing which deepened our relationship and built us into one family. We started saving and slowly it grew. We are amazed to see that today we have Rs. 31,000/- as savings. The sisters and organizers of AAWDC taught us various income generating activities and helped us to obtain bank loans. All the ten of us worked together with AAWDC in all their efforts. In 2005 and 2009 we received Rs.3,58,000/- from bank and Rs. 48,000/- from Minority Commission as loans respectively for initiating income generation activities.

Among us 8 members are doing various IGPs; out of these, 4 of us are running tiffin centres, one is selling fire wood and 3 are conducting cycle repair shop. We have also addressed some environmental concerns in our village. Once we mobilized people and organized a dharna in front of the Municipal Office to clean up drainage in our village, which they earlier refused to do. We also do our best to alleviate the sufferings of anyone in need. Our group is supporting 2 poor children to meet their educational expenses every year from 2006 onwards. We extended financial support to a needy cancer patient for 5 years, until his death. For any social cause, we always give whatever we can and also go around and collect from others and contribute for deserving people.

When we started our SHG all of us were non-literates, but within a year we learnt to read and write by attending earnestly the adult literacy class conducted by AAWDC.

Our greatest dream is to give good education to our children and instil in them values, thereby make them good citizens with concern for fellow human beings. We also hope to improve our village by making every woman of our village an SHG member, conscientising them on their worth as women, thus enabling them to lead a dignified life.

CDEW brought changes in our lives

2003 is a memorable year for the people of Uriyarikunnu, a costal village in Karimkulam Panchayath, Puthiyathura, Trivandrum District, Kerala. It was in June 2003, Sr. Agnes Fernandez, Sr.

Helen Netto and Mr. Shaji from CDEW came to our village to initiate us in Self Help Groups. We had many b i t t e r experiences in the past with



various agencies which camp up with the idea of SHGs but later left us in lurch. When sisters approached us we unanimously denied any co-operation to them as we feared that it will be another attempt in vain. But without retreating, sisters continued to visit us, determined to make changes in our lives and surroundings. Slowly 18 of us came together and formed a SHG, which we named "AKHILA".

We were living in poverty and hopelessness without any source of regular income, often fighting with each other for petty reasons. We were totally depending upon the income of our husbands from fishing, which is seasonal and meager, as they did not have their own fishing equipments. The usurious money lenders were our 'saviours' who took advantage of our poverty making us poorer day by day.

Our children though enrolled in schools, rarely attended. As we were all non-literates, we did not care much for our

education. Being the most thickly populated panchayat of South Asia, our village and surroundings were the most unhygienic and we never cared to keep them clean. We were often attacked by various illnesses, but never bothered to take proper medication nor improve the sanitation. All these compelled us to lead a life excluded from the mainstream.

The first step sisters took was to teach us cleanliness. Slowly, we understood the importance of it and we paid proper attention to keep ourselves, and our homes clean by not throwing the waste around our homes. We learnt how important it is to keep food and drinking water clean and covered. It gradually improved our general health.

During the weekly SHG meetings and later through monthly federation meetings, we received valuable knowledge and instructions on various useful topics from sisters and other resource persons, on clean environment, importance of education, savings, how to maintain peace and harmony at home and around, importance of being a mother and her rights and duties towards husband, children and society, etc. We were keen to practice all what we learnt and we could see many positive changes taking place in us.

As a second step, we realized the need for earning additional income so as to get rid of our debts. We learnt various IGPs and how to run a successful IGP within our limited resources and capacities. Many training programmes were organized to capacitate us. Though some of us were going for fish vending, they used to tell us sad events of how people isolate them in the bus and public places. But sisters taught us to dress up well, keep ourselves clean and go for fish vending in a decent manner, which gave us dignity, enhanced our self esteem and gained us more customers.

It was an encouragement for all of us and 18 of us took up fish vending as an IGP drawing small loan from SHG instead of taking from the money lenders at high interest rate. We earned a decent income of Rs.250/- to Rs.300/- per day.

- All the 18 of us learnt to write our names and sign.
- There are no more petty quarrels among us, but we have learnt to settle disputes amicably and grow together.
- All our children are now attending schools as we understood the importance of education.
- Loans taken from SHGs helped us to buy our own fishing implements for our husbands who were daily wage laborers. This enhanced our income.
- Five of us repaired our houses and all the members collaborated and contributed to it in cash, kind and labour.
- We helped 7 families for marriage and to lead a happy life.
- During Tsunami all of us were there to help out those who lost their houses and livelihoods with our kind words, material assistance and support.
- We collected Rs.10,000/- to help a kidney patient and another person affected by serious illness and Rs.3000/- was given to our brethren, victims of communal riots in Orissa.
- Five of our members' husbands were chronic alcoholics. Through our constant intervention all the five of them gave up drinking.
- We ensured that all the celebrations in our homes were liquor free.
- Money lenders no more prowl around our houses.

- We show to the world that we are courageous women through stage performances and rallies conducted on Women's Day, World AIDS day etc.
- We make sure that the village is clean every year before the monsoon, Christmas, Easter, Onam, etc.
- All of us actively participate in the Grama Sabha and motivate others also to go.
- In 2004 one of the worst tidal waves affected our village contaminating the drinking water sources of the entire village. 138 houses were fully and 196 partially damaged. Even after constant requests, we were denied justice from the government. We mobilized many women and approached the Chief Minister, Finance Minister and District Collector and obtained relief fund due to us.

Our plan is to provide higher education for all our children, which will give them bright future and make our village a liquor free model village. We will also help other SHGs in our area to grow and become self-reliant and role models

3. Confident individuals living with dignity

I never thought I will make it to this stage!

My name is Rosy, I hail from Bangalore and I am 19 years old. I was an unfortunate little child born into this world. My mother gave me away as a little babe to a neighbouring family who had no girl children and also agreed to pay the neighbour Rs.100/- every month



to meet my expenses. But she was not faithful to her promise and never paid the amount. But my adopted mother kept me in her home along with her other children. My mother sometimes used to visit me under the disguise of a visitor and she never admitted that I was her own child. As I grew up, during one of her visits, I overheard my mother telling to another lady "She is my daughter...!" I cherished these words for years and lived with the hope that one day she will accept me. For 14 long years, I worked as a servant in my adopted family. I suffered much and was ill treated there. Finally one day I ran away from there and ended up in police custody and they took me to Navajeevana, Bangalore, run by the Salesian sisters. From then on Navajeevana became my own home and the Sisters my mother.

Since I knew only household works, I was happy to work in the kitchen. But seeing my interest in reading and writing sisters taught me privately and later placed me in class VII at GKBMS School near Chamrajpet, Bangalore. I passed class VII and joined Karnataka open school and passed X. I am very proud of my achievement in obtaining the X grade certificate and it adds more value to me as a successful person. The Sisters at Navajeevana were so caring and it is their interest, kindness, concern and love that gave me a new life. Finally I am happy to say that I am working as a Chef in a famous pizza shop in Bangalore and earning a decent income.

Sr Annakutty persuaded my mother and after a few years my mother accepted me. Nevertheless Auxilium Navajeevana is my real home!

It is to God and the good Salesian sisters, that I owe my profound gratitude for making my life worthwhile. I never thought I will make it to this stage.

Nirmal Jyothi played great role in my life

I am Afseena, hailing from a village near Bannerghatta, Bangalore. After completing Higher Secondary, I was not doing anything. Then one day I heard from my friends about Nirmal Jyothi Technical Institute run by Salesian Sisters, at Bannerghatta, Bangalore. With mixed feelings I entered the portals of Nirmal Jyothi, but soon I realized that I wanted to be



part of it. The Salesian sisters explained to me about the various courses and what I heard from the students there, made me choose Secretarial course for my future studies. Along with it, I received coaching in English, which I mastered soon with the help of Language Lab and committed and expert teachers.

The most striking of all the courses conducted at Nirmal Jyothi is life coping skills. This course gave me confidence, hope, and leadership skills and helped me to develop my personality so well. Today I owe a great deal of what I am to Nirmal Jyothi.

I never felt burdened to pay the fee as it is the lowest in comparison to other institutions. Soon after completing the course I got a job in Data Collection Info tech Pvt. Ltd, Bangalore with a salary of Rs.6000/- through campus interview. I am very grateful to Salesian sisters and Nirmal Jyothi as they have played a great role to light up my life. They not only offered me a bright future, but also helped me to lead a fuller life and enabled me to help my family too.

E. Joy of working in social ministry

My journey in social ministry

“To be a voice to the voiceless” was the vision I cherished most as I got involved in the Social Ministry. The Biblical text “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour”(Lk 4:18 –19) has been the source of my inspiration and strength in all my endeavours.



Prompted by Mary’s example “Do whatever he tells you “(Jn 2: 1 – 11) I decided to involve everyone in action. I tried to initiate participatory approach, which made me to understand the felt need of the people and work for it. “When they could not bring him to Jesus, they removed the roof above him and let down the mat” says the scriptures. (Mk 2:3-5) This is exactly what I tried to do and God provided me many opportunities.

My entry into social ministry was in 1990 when I began working with Trivandrum Social Service Society (TSSS) and they put me in charge of Rural Health Education programmes. It offered me an opportunity to travel throughout the diocese of Trivandrum especially in the costal areas and confront the realities of the lives of the poor people. During this time TSSS was making arrangements and plans to launch a series of protests against the liquor policy of the Government of Kerala,

liquor lobby and illicit liquor brewing. I was appointed as the secretary of the Commission for Health and Anti-alcoholism. We began organizing dharnas and rallies demanding the immediate closure of the liquor shops, to raid and stop all the illicit liquor dens and declare Kerala as liquor-free State.

Since TSSS was close to the secretariat, often I had chance to meet the Minister of Health and even the Chief Minister and spoke about our demands. After a long struggle the government decided to close all the liquor shops. Since many were addicted to alcoholism we had to take remedial steps to liberate the addicted victims. A de-addiction centre was opened and I was to supervise its management. From this experience I learnt to work with NGOs and GOs. I had many chances to work with the broken and shattered persons, who faced disgrace and exclusion from the families and outside. Their sorrow and pains determined me to take a strong stand against alcoholism, which helped me to declare an open war with the liquor lobby and the liquor policy of the government. We had many opponents who were powerful politicians, rich liquor maffia and even some officials. Once during a dharna in front of a liquor shop we were beaten up and attacked with weapons in which many women were injured, including me.

Pozhiyoor, a costal village in Trivandrum District was notorious for its illicit liquor trade. Liquor brewing was the main source of income of the people of this village. From there liquor was supplied to all over Kerala and outside. Our well planned activities bore fruit and we succeeded in saving this village from this evil and provided alternate employment for the

people. We were blamed by many as the whole village lost their livelihood and some men fell sick due to sudden stopping of drinking. We had to face fierce opposition from goondas, police, Government Officials and the public. We sent all the addicted patients for treatment and during this time sensing the need Trivandrum diocese initiated Pratheeksha De-addiction Center, which was also partly entrusted to my care.

During this struggle police and government tried to divert the attention of the public by spreading news of a communal clash in the area. Four innocent men of one particular community were killed and their bodies were hidden. We had to fight hard to get the bodies and in this struggle I was booked by the police as the first witness and had to go into hiding for one week, until the diocese worked hard to bring peace and withdrew the case. Later my life was threatened and I had to face much hardship.

Today Pozhiyoor stands as a sign of victory over evil and witness to the hard work of a committed team which liberated the whole village from the bondage of liquor. It is one of the most memorable incidents in my social ministry.

With the Young at Risk (YAR)

Working with street children at Navajeevana, Bangalore for two years, and walking daily along the market streets and railway station of Bangalore, I learnt the struggles of the poor on the streets. Working hand in hand with Dr. Sheshadri, Child Specialist of NIMANS widened my knowledge about child trafficking. This experience also provided me another

opportunity to learn from other NGOs. Here too along with my sisters God made me an instrument to save young lives from the perils of life and to give them a hopeful future.

With the poor families of Quilon, kerala

The diocese of Quilon was yet another fertile ground where I learnt primary lessons of Income Generating Programmes. I worked with 400 poor families including many widows all over the diocese. During the 3 years (1998 – 2000) I journeyed with these families, sharing their joys and sorrows. Here I came in touch with real poverty, fears and anxieties of the excluded. My efforts bore many fruits such as education for children, women empowerment through various awareness programmes, income generating programmes, legal assistance, etc. Here I witnessed God's love and mercy flowing over the poor through many generous benefactors, who took seriously the exhortation of Jesus, "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me". My efforts made many poor women bloom into leaders and successful entrepreneurs and witnesses of God's love in the world.

At Puthiyathura – A mission with a difference

The year 2003 saw a great revival in the province, its official entry into women empowerment through Centre for Development and Empowerment of Women (CDEW) under the leadership of Sr. Anna Thekke. I was appointed as the Regional Coordinator of Women Empowerment Programmes in Kerala with 7 SHGs spread from Kasargode to Triyandrum.

Stationed at Puthiyathura, the challenge was to initiate SHGs. It was a herculean task as we were discouraged by the Government Officials and other NGOs around. Every one of them had tried their level best to start SHGs and had failed with people of Uniarikkunnu, a thickly populated village on the sea shore near Auxilium Centre, Puithyathura. With the strong support of Sr. Helen Netto and a band of trained and committed community organizers CDEW decided to face the challenges and go ahead with 30 Self Help Groups with 385 women members. This village stands today as an epitome of courage and determination. The women are role models for the whole area and 90% of them have now income generating activities.

Working with different NGOs opened new avenues and brought various projects for these women, such as housing and sanitation, technical education, capacity building and awareness programmes. The future dream of these women is to make Puthiyathura a liquor free model village.

Being a member of Social Action Movements I could courageously enter into any government and non government offices and demand the rights of the people and often the demands were met. Besides this I could tap any local and other resources for the wellbeing of the people. In any emergency situation I would be there among the people and they appreciated my presence and this was another point for my growth.

I thank God for making me an instrument in transforming the lives of many women and young people. By nature I am timid and afraid of facing people and speaking in public. The opportunities I received widened my knowledge and developed my inner potentialities and today I have become courageous and daring. I can speak anywhere to anyone without fear. Since I never expected any thanks from anyone I never felt discouraged. I have witnessed the growth of many people, especially the young who have grown in self confidence. My greatest wish is to work for the poor people until the end my life, spending all my energy, using all my skills and time to liberate every individual from poverty and create a world where everyone will have a chance to live a decent and contented life. I gratefully remember everyone who helped me to be what I am today.

- Sr. Agnes Fernandez

My life experience in social ministry

I am happy and thankful to the Lord Almighty for giving me this wonderful opportunity to share my experiences in the social ministry. My social ministry began with the training program organized by Sr. Anna T, for the Community organizers, aiming "To build up a caring society around us where love, brotherhood, solidarity, Economic advancement and empowerment of women are nurtured". This training program was conducted at Palluruthy Auxilium Centre from 14th to 18th July 2004. All the houses of Kerala were invited for this



program. From each of the 7 centres one sister and 2 women leaders participated. I was sent from Kattappana. This was the starting point of my life in the social ministry. At the end of it I could say I enjoyed and gained knowledge and I could open my eyes and heart for the under privileged women.

During this meeting, Sr. Anna T, Directress of CDEW, Sr. Agenez Fernandes and Mr. Shaji enriched me with their wide knowledge and experience. They helped me to understand the current social situation, the need of empowerment of women etc. I could hear an inner voice within myself telling me to take up this new challenge with total commitment. After my training program I came back to Kattappana with new vigor and enthusiasm to start the Self Help Groups with the support of the local community along with Bodhana, a social service centre of Tiruvalla Diocese. We formed few groups within a short time and I saw a vast difference from other SHGs. The women got great confidence in me and they started to come up at all the levels. Seeing the growth and development of the area I decided to spend my time and energy for them. Through different projects and loans I was able to support them. They started individual as well as group IGPs. Through our continuous visit and encouragement many groups were formed in the same village and they started different IGPs. Continuous awareness programmes helped them to gain knowledge, self confidence, and realize the dignity of womanhood and the importance of savings. The positive changes that brought about in the life of women as well as in their families gave me more enthusiasm and courage to take up the work.

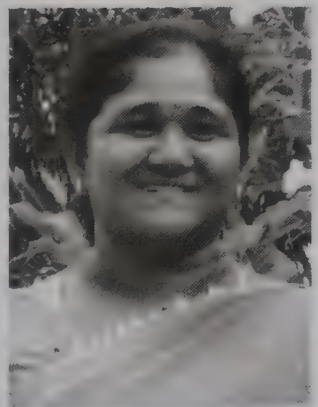
After entering in the social ministry I had lot of satisfaction and happiness and more than that it helped me to strengthen my vocation and trust and confidence in God. My prayer became more meaningful and frequent. Whenever I faced with difficulties and misunderstanding, God gave me the grace to go through them and experience his love and care for me through different people. Through this ministry I was able to help many poor people.

For about 5 years I worked in Kattappana. Now for the past 4 years I am in Kanakakunnu doing the same work. I can say that these nine years of life are the happiest years of my life. Entering into the social ministry has helped me to be a happy FMA and cherish my vocation and religious life.

Sr. Teresa Rani.

The joy of being a social worker

I hail from a lower middle class family in Ongole, Prakasam District, Andhra Pradesh. Since my father passed away at my young age, my mother had to work very hard to bring us up. Added to this my elder brother also passed away. Along with my mother, I had to shoulder the responsibility of looking after my younger ones. With much difficulty, I completed my graduation and then got married.



When I was in search of a job, Salesian Sisters offered me a job in 2003 as a teacher for back to school children belonging

to Budabukkala community. Most of these children were rag pickers or beggars. I found it difficult to be with them as they used to be very dirty and did not have any manners. But I was encouraged and supported with the thought, which Sr. Veronica Gali used to share with me “Anything done to the least of Gods people will be amply rewarded”. After few months Sr. Veronica included me in a one month training programme conducted for the Community Organizers at Auxilium Centre, Ongole by International Services Association (INSA), Bangalore. During this training, I learnt well what it is meant to be a Social Worker and his/her great responsibilities towards society.

After the training, I joined as a full time staff - a Community Organizer at Auxilium Women Development Centre, Ongole. I was given the charge of NTR colony area to work with the Budabukkala community to promote their all round development through formation of SHGs, health, literacy programmes, income generating activities and to capacitate them to obtain their various social and basic needs fulfilled by the Government. The INSA Training capacitated me with knowledge and skills to go through the challenges and demands entailed in the work. Though hesitantly I entered, slowly I was helped to gain self confidence and skills and with constant encouragement from the sisters and co-staff I began to love social work. When I look back, I am filled with joy to see the great transformation that has taken place in the Budabukkala community. I am grateful to God Almighty for making me part of this great plan for His people.

The Budabukkala women have learnt to demand their rights, to read and write, able to stand up in any platform and speak,

have good amount saved in their names, and have understood their worth as women. They are respected and have a say in their families. They have also learnt primary lessons of good health and cleanliness and it saved them from many diseases to which they were falling prey. All of them are now literate. They have got houses, title deeds for their little plots, latrines, roads, water connections, drainage in their villages, ration cards, voter's cards, etc. Women have understood the importance of education and some of their children are now doing I.T courses, MBA etc. These poor women have become instruments of social change in their society.

Many a time I was discouraged by the lethargy of the government officials, but my convictions and the guidance and support of the Sisters had helped me to walk with the poor. Today, with joy and happiness I can say that the Budabukkala community has overcome their teething troubles, inhibitions, superstitious beliefs and are slowly learning to live with self respect as citizens. Most of them have their own income through some small IGPs. My source of strength was "Anything done to the least of Gods people will be amply rewarded."

G Rani

Province report prepared by
Sis. Anna Thekke FMA
Social Development Coordinator
Bangalore Province - INK

CHENNAI - INM



CHENNAI PROVINCE

A. General profile:

Name of the Province	:	St. Thomas, the Apostle
Name of the Social Development Office	:	"ARUWYE" Auxilium Centre For Rural Under-Privileged Women and Youth Empowerment
a) Name of the S.D.C.	:	Sr. Joseph Lumin Priscilla
Address with pin code	:	Mazzarello Convent, United India Colony III Main Road, 5th Cross Street, Kodambakkam Chennai - 600 024.
b) Tel. No	:	044 - 247 30 815
Fax	:	044 - 247 30 815
Email	:	inmfmdo@gmail.com
c) Year of Establishment	:	27.08.1996

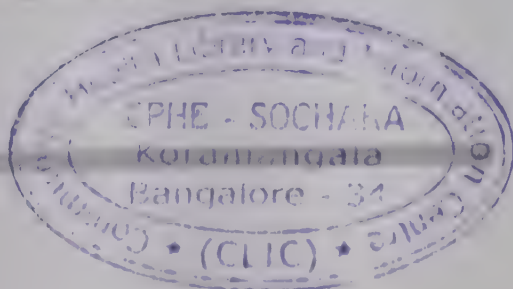
Vision

We, the FMA of the Province of St. Thomas, the Apostle, Chennai, living in a pluralistic society and challenged by the effects of globalization and discrimination based on caste, creed and gender, commit ourselves to reconstruct a humane and just society, permeated with sound values assuring respect and dignity to the poor and the marginalized women, youth and children.

Mission

In Partnership with the people, we shall promote:

- Human dignity, gender equity and justice through education and skill training.
- People to have access and ownership over common resources
- Alternative economic activity and people's organizations for sustainable livelihood.
- Preventive and curative health care.



- Children's rights.
- Protection of women, youth and children through legal education and Support.
- Advocacy and lobbying for transparent and good governance at all levels.
- Network solidarity.
- Better coordinator and liaison with Development organizations and projects.

Service areas

a) Number of states covered	:	1
b) Number of districts covered	:	10
c) The priority groups	:	Dalits, Tribals, fisherfolk, farmers, migrants, lepers, widows and domestic workers

S. No	Beneficiaries	No
1	Dalits	1,50,000
2	Tribals	15,000
3	Fisherfolk	15,000
4	Farmers	30,000
5	Migrants	30,000
6	Lepers	5,000
7	Widows	5,000
8	Domestic workers	50,000
	Total	3,00,000

Main strategies of intervention of the Social Development Office

The thrust areas of Women Empowerment:

Formation, Training,
Creating awareness,
Growth in Economic status,
Social Contribution,
Strengthening their value system.

B. Details of Self Help Groups / Federation

a) Year of starting	:	1995
b) Total number of groups	:	1356
c) Number of Women Groups	:	1270
Number of Men Groups	:	66
d) Number of Youth groups	:	16
Groups for Handicapped	:	2
Groups for Widows	:	2
e) Average number of members in a group	:	12 to 20
Total members	:	22104
f) Frequency of meetings	:	Weekly, Monthly
Savings per month / Week Rs.	:	10 to 25
g) Mode of saving	:	Weekly, Monthly
h) Total savings upto June 2009	:	Rs.14, 98, 24, 981/-
i) Total loans upto June 2009	:	
a) Internal loan	:	Rs. 29, 96, 49,962/-
b) Bank loan	:	Rs. 14, 95, 56,664/-
c) Loan given from centre: /or any other	:	Rs. 9, 33,350/-
j) Any other schemes available /accessed from the government: Thattco		
10 groups Rs. 26, 00,000/-		
k) Total Number of People involved in IGP	:	3825
l) Types of IGPs	:	550

Small business like selling flowers, chillies, rice, sarees, making toys, stitching bags, making jewels, cycle shop, driving, recycling the plastic things, textiles, provision shops, fast food, ready made garments, lathe work, beauty parlor, preparation of various detergents, petty shops, plate making, agriculture, rearing cattle, milk society, mushroom making, selling home appliances, tailoring, embroidery and running a mess.

List of persons involved in each category and the income earned approximately are given in the table below

S.No	Name of IGP	No. of People Involved	Approximate Income per month
1.	Tailoring	830	Upto Rs. 3000/-
2.	Embroidery	200	Upto Rs. 2000/-
3.	Textiles Shop	150	Upto Rs. 3000/-
4.	Rice Shop	850	Upto Rs. 4000/-
5.	Mess	265	Upto Rs. 3500/-
6.	Provision Shop	125	Upto Rs. 2500/-
7.	Lathe Work	20	Upto Rs. 5000/-
8.	Fast Food	250	Upto Rs. 3500/-
9.	Readymade garments	50	Upto Rs. 2500/-
10.	Beauty Parlor	125	Upto Rs. 5000/-
11.	Detergents	100	Upto Rs. 1500/-
12.	Agriculture	150	Upto Rs. 1000/-
13.	Interior Decorations	65	Upto Rs. 4000/-
14.	Toys and bag Making	165	Upto Rs. 2000/-
15.	Ornaments	25	Upto Rs. 2500/-
16.	Remoulding the plastics	25	Upto Rs. 3500/-
17.	Cycle Shop	20	Upto Rs. 2000/-
18.	Computer Training Centre	17	Upto Rs. 3000/-
19.	Milk Society	20	Upto Rs. 5000/-
20.	Glass Painting	175	Upto Rs. 2000/-
21.	Driving	50	Upto Rs. 4000/-
22.	Arracks Plate	8	Upto Rs. 5000/-
23.	Making flower Vase	125	Upto Rs. 1500/-
24.	Bakery	25	Upto Rs. 4000/-
	Total	3825	

m) No. of SHGs linked to Bank /
Diocese / Other organizations? : 1356

Federation

- a) Do you have Federations or equivalent bodies? : Yes
- b) No. of Federations : 6
- Members in Federations : 1000
- c) Frequency of meetings : Monthly
- d) Total Number of SHGs linked
- With Federation : 144
- e) The main objectives of Federation
- To develop their ward with the basic facilities especially with regard to children and women.
 - To strengthen the groups by sharing their ideas in order to improve their economic status.
 - To build rapport with other NGOs.
 - To collaborate with the Government in “Education for all” project.
- f) Do you have Federation Common Fund? : Yes

Main activities of SHGs and Federation

SHGs

- Holding weekly meetings
- Savings and Credit
- Income generating programme to increase their family income
- Trainings with regard to accounting skills, maintaining of various registers and skills to do IGP
- Exhibiting one's talents and creating awareness
- Celebrating all the national and international anniversaries related to children and women

Federation

- Holding monthly meetings of representatives from the members of SHGs.
- Celebrating all the national and international anniversaries related to children and women
- Exhibiting one's talents and creating awareness
- Initiating income generation programmes to increase their family income

Awareness and training Programmes for SHG s/ Federation

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|--|
| a) | Awareness programme | : | Health HIV/AIDS
Anti Alcoholism
Religious harmony
Environment and Ecology
Peace and Harmony |
| b) | Various IGP Trainings | | Entrepreneurship
Development Program

Accounting skills
Leadership skills
Legal Education |

Other related activities

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Total number of Committees | : | 11
Slum Committee,
Consisting of 3 women
from SHG,
3 Men,
2 youth; and 4 Children |
|----------------------------|---|--|

The activities of the committees

Once in a month they come together for a meeting and discuss about the development of their children and monitor whether their children are going to school or dropping out from the school. They also go to the Government departments to give petitions to the authorities and address issues like child labour, child trafficking etc...

C. History

- 1922 : Women empowerment through formal and Technical education, Health Care, Mother and Child Programmes in rural areas by Salesian Sisters of Don Bosco
- 1991 : Towards marginalized young women particularly Street Girls
- 1995 : Starting of Self Help Groups and Women Cells

2000 : Income Generation Programmes, Craft Center and Small Enterprises

2004 : 400 Self Help Groups, ANHAL Women Movement to arrive at Gender Equality for Quality Life

Goal

Gender Equality for Quality Life

Vision

Unite marginalized women in groups to restore their self dignity and promote economic self sufficiency empowering them to participate in socio cultural and political decision making with equal partnership to improve the quality of life

Objectives

- To unite women as group for capacity building
- To create awareness regarding the human rights of women especially those of the poor and marginalized
- To evolve programmes of promoting gender sensitive education in the formal
- and non formal set ups
- To develop programmes that promote economic sustainability for women below poverty line
- To involve men in programmes of Gender Justice so as to work towards a society of equality.

Strategies

- Formation of Self Help Groups
- Micro credit
- Income Generation Programmes
- Leadership training
- Human Rights and Women Right Education

- Lobbying for Girl Child Rights
- Advocacy to avail Government Schemes for needy women to get basic necessities
- Political participation
- Gender Sensitive Education
- Local Sponsorship Programmes; Each One Reach One
- Education for Communal Harmony
- Networking and Collaborations with Organization
- Shelter Homes for Street Girls
- Short Stay Home for Women in Distress
- Participation of Women and Men in Capacity Building

Future focus

- Holistic health programme for women
- Linking women groups in to a movement
- Conscious effort to reach towards gender justice
- Encouraging women for more participation in political processes
- Using Information Technology and Computer education for rural education
- Initiating research, publication and documentation center on women Issues
- Allotting more funds for developing entrepreneurship
- Promoting skills, marketing skills and production centers
- Becoming eco friendly and physically challenged friendly

Linkage with NGOs, HR organizations and Government

Government: Government administration, Social Welfare Board, SSA, TNWD, Child Line, All Women Help Line and Juvenile Justice Board

Partner NGOs

SOC SEAD Trichy, Save Tirupur, DBAI Coimbatore, DBAI Salem, Sava Nilayam Coimbatore, Udavum jyothi Chennai, DRSWS Salem, WORD Pallipalayam, WORD Pudukottai, Aravanikkum Anbu illam,

FFC Coimbatore, Kovai Class, POLE Salem, Maraiialaya Tirupur, Marialaya Dharmapuri, Marialaya Chennai, Marialaya Erode, St. Patrick house of hope for women

Other NGOs

Coimbatore Multi-purpose Social Service Society, Thayagam, Imayam, Tossam, EMGMFO Family for Orphan, Madrasa Minhajul Uloom, Mehar Childrens Village, Sadguru Sevahram, Sharanalayam Pollachi, Sontham Coimbatore, Sri Ramakrishna Ashramam Coimbatore, CRCS CEE, CSI – Kendra Coimbatore, KRISH Coimbatore, Metro Foundation Mettupalayam, Neyam Kuttaiyur, Rehabilitation Coimbatore, Rotary's Coimbatore, St. Annes Coimbatore, Upahar Coimbatore, Vidya Vikasini Coimbatore, Avinashilingam Institue Coimbatore, Karunai Illam Karamadai, Welfare Coimbatore, The United Physically Handicapped Coimbatore, The Society for the Aid of Handicapped Children, Coimbatore, Sahai Coimbatore.

Awards and achievements

On 5 February 2005, Sr. Viagulam women coordinator received an award – a trophy for more linkages in North Chennai at Valluvarkottam Nungambakkam.



On 28 August 2005, Vanavil group, received an award from the Chief Minister Jayalalithaa Rs, 5000 and a trophy for the best S.H.G at Chennai district. (3 Certificates and photographs)

On 25 November 2006 Ezhuchi Virudhu was awarded to the following:

Zone I	-	I	Prize	Brindhvan - 2
Zone I	-	II	Prize	Thanga Natchathiram - 2
Zone II	-	I	Prize	Vanna Malar - 2
Zone III	-	II	Prize	Vairam
Zone III	-	I	Prize	Amman - 2
Zone III	-	III	Prize	Rani

On 25 September 2007, Thendral group received Manimegalai Award for the Best group in Chennai District along with Rs 50,000/- and a trophy from Dr. Kalainger Karunanithi the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

On 24 November 2007, Ezhuchi Virudhu was awarded to the following

Zone I	-	I	Prize	Vanavil
Zone I	-	I	Prize	Annai Nila Oli
Zone II	-	II	Prize	Nijangal
Zone III	-	II	Prize	Maharani
Zone IX	-	III	Prize	Sinhu Bharathi
Zone IX	-	II	Prize	Tharagai Trophy

- In 2009 five times live programme was given in *Pothigai* Channel about the family and maintaining the groups.
- Two of our women from SHGs were elected as ward councilors. *Sathiya Bama* (25th Division) and *Ramesh Kannan Malini* (50th Division)
- Five more women became councilors in various divisions in the District of Sivagangai.



Ezhuchi award was also given by Sowrnambal Trust

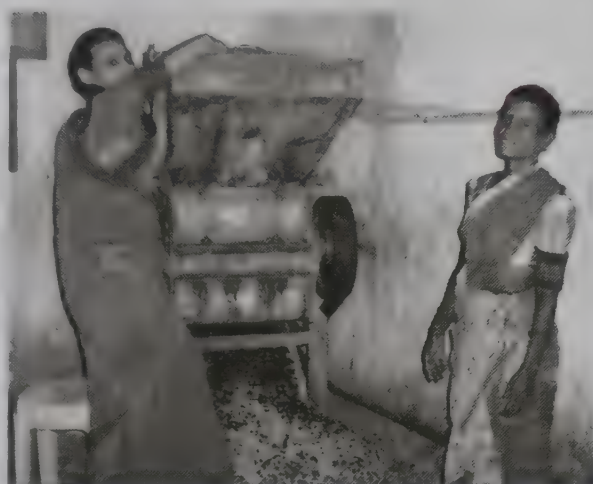
Zone I	I	Prize and	III Prize
Zone II	I	Prize and	III Prize
Zone III	I	Prize and	II Prize

D. Success stories

1. Income Generation Programmes

I am a widow and I train widows in my company

I started my life as a simple woman. I was a house wife looking after my two sons. All appreciated my life particularly in handling the economic status of the family. I was not involved in any outside activities except my family. Suddenly my husband died so I was burdened with all the responsibilities of my family such as paying house rent, maintaining the family, children's school fees and other expenses. Slowly I learnt how to recycle the plastics.



In 2002, I joined in the Everest women's group and attended many training programmes. My family situation forced me to take up this opportunity to earn my living. The group members helped me to improve my business. I gained self confidence and learnt driving a two wheeler to move around to carry on my business. Thus I began a company. Then, I wanted to

share my experience with the other women like me, to come up in life. So I started a group named *Vidiyal Dharisanam* with the help of the salesian sisters, in



which only widows could join. I gave them jobs in my company in order to build their self confidence. Indian bank gave us Rs 70,000 /- as loan for the first time and the second time we

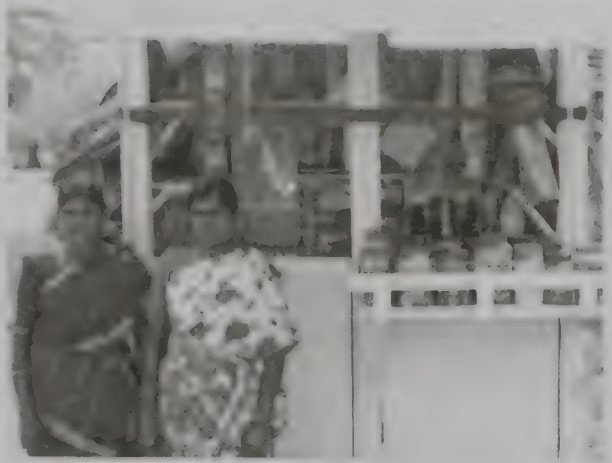


received loan of Rs 1,50,000 and the third time we received Rs. 2,00,000/- We also got Rs.10,000/- as revolving fund. Even though my sons got married and settled far from the family, I still

continue to do my business and I am proud to stand on my own feet. This self help group lighted up my life once again to start anew. I am writing this to thank God and all the persons who helped me to recognize my role in my family and society. Woman is not an instrument to work and rest; instead she has a role in building the society by constructing the family.

- *Sarasvathy*

I am the leader of Lotus group. I have three girls and all of them are married. My husband deserted me some years back. We started our group on 14.10.2004 under the guidance of Marialaya. For the past four years we are running our SHG enthusiastically.



I was born and brought up in a village situation. I do not know much about anything of the world. I was ill-treated by my husband. That was the time I came to know about the sisters of Marialaya and their work among marginalized women. Mrs. Cecilia came to my place and explained



about the works of SHG's. That gave me courage to overcome my difficult and painful situations and to form a new SHG in my place itself. In our group most of us do small business like petty shop, snacks shop, selling



flowers, running a mess etc. I am running a mess for the past four years. Through this I earn Rs.3000/ per month now I am happy to say that I stand on my own feet and also help others in their need. I am a happy and content woman. Through various input sessions conducted, I learnt to communicate with different types of persons and face different situations in life. The credit goes to Marialaya.

- Meenambal

2. SHG units

We learnt to claim our rights

As the proverb says unity is our strength, Pudu Vidiyal SHG was formed on 11.07.2006 under the guidance of Marialaya. We conduct meetings regularly and do our saving regularly. So we got loan from the Bank Rs.1,25,000/- With that amount we started our work. As a group we make



ornaments, two of us run tailoring shop and provision shop and one person is having a mess. We get per month Rs.1500 – 2500/- as income. We also

get lot of experiences in different ways to come up in our lives. Through life coping skills we are given knowledge, confidence and the ability to relate with persons of various walks of life. Above all we have grown in self-confidence and



courage. We also get involved in some social activities to fulfill the basic needs of the people like getting ration card, identity card, street lights and keeping the surroundings clean and tidy. We are happy that God created us, as women. Thanks to the sisters who support the depressed and the marginalised.

Vanavil women group



Mariyalaya is our institute. They were the ones who encouraged us to start the group Vanavil on 8.12.03. We were just house wives. After the formation of the group we gained

confidence and courage to work as a group. At present, we are not only better in socio-economic status but also help other

marginalized in the society to face life with courage and confidence.

We come as a group and join in selling milk and clothes. Every year we gain 2 lakhs in selling saree and milk.



Total Savings	-	Rs. 1, 25, 940
Interest	-	Rs. 53,715
Profit in milk	-	Rs. 45,233
Profit in sale of saree	-	Rs. 1, 25,940
Gross Profit	-	Rs. 3, 17,267

We also received Rs. 8,00,000/- as loan from Indian Bank.

There was a wine shop in our street, which became a great nuisance not only to the people living in that street but also for all the school going children. As a group we approached the area councilor and demanded closing of the shop and succeeded.



In our area, a man was running a cable service so he alone was enjoying the electricity. We brought it to the knowledge of the higher authority and now it is distributed to all in the neighborhood.

Since our group was very attentive to the needs of the person and society we had the recognition by the government and received the award as the best Women Group of the district. We also received the I prize from Sornamal Education Trust.

3. Confident individuals living with dignity

We run a decent business

We, the Puratchi Puyal woman self help group would like to share the way we have improved our lives. There are literates and illiterates in our group. As soon as we became



members we were trained to learn, read and write the alphabets and sign our names. Then we started an account in the bank and managed the transaction by ourselves. Those who were putting thumb impression are now signing. The training and skills we received in our lives helped us to lead a dignified life.

We started off with our entrepreneurial activity by making artificial flowers. We made artificial garlands, sold them and made a modest profit. At this juncture, we got the



rarest of the rare opportunity. Mariyalaya asked us to participate in a handicrafts exhibition at Valuvarkottam. Our

products were well received by the consumers. Among the galaxy of the visitors, Deputy C.M. Mr. K. Stalin and the Chairperson of Social Welfare Board Mrs. Salma visited our stall. We made a good



profit and our initiative was a grand success. After this, Mariyalaya gave us plenty of opportunities to participate in various exhibitions held in and around the city.

We owe our thanks to all who helped us in various ways. We are now a bunch of talented entrepreneurs. These achievements have made a big difference in our lives. It gave us confidence and motivation to improve the standard of our lives. So far we didn't know how to start a business. Now with the help of Mariyalaya, we have learnt to face any challenge in life. We are hoping for a bright future ahead of us.

- Puratchi Puyal Group

We run a printing press!

We the Trivarrul group is very happy to share with you the achievements of ours after forming the women group. Indeed it is the best opportunity for us to be united and to work as well. Good formation was given to us by the Salesian sisters. They also helped us by motivating us with higher ideals.



We are 20 of us in our group named it as Tiruvarrul Group. Though we faced many difficulties economically we were ready to achieve something in our lives. So with the help of bank loan we started a printing press and book binding shop. Indeed we were glad to meet people in our houses and this work helped us to be more courageous to face the reality of the world. Now we are very happy and able to work with our own money.



We also received education through the educators around our place. We all became experts in handling money which really helped us to improve the economic status of our families. We were also given spiritual and psychological training which gave us strength during times of suffering. Once again we thank God and all the people who helped us.

- Truvarrul group

E. Joy of working in social ministry

Prayer enhances my work

I am working in Kovai Marialaya for the past five years. In the beginning I did not know much about the work of SHGs. Yet I came here to work for the upliftment of women in the society. Years of experience taught me to become more courageous and an efficient person, and render service to individuals as well as groups. Before starting our work every day we have prayer service which gives push for the day. The way of relating



with the people, children and with the staff by the sisters helped me to be cheerful in my mission and in the family. I also enjoy the prayer moments like day with God, different ways of animating the groups, outings etc. By nature I was very much timid, yet Marialaya gave me a lot of opportunities to work with different people and institutions like the Government and non- Governmental sectors. I am grateful to them for their selfless service which they render for the bright future of the street children, women, and the abandoned youth.

- Mrs. Cecilia

Awards and struggles are the two sides of a coin

I had an inclination for the service of the poor and downtrodden from the beginning. But all along, I was missioned in schools, teaching the children of North Arcot district. After my retirement when my superior asked me to go to Marialaya, I had good disposition to go but I knew nothing about the work done by Mariyalaya not even how to form Self Help Groups. By the grace of God and help received from others quickly I learnt the job. I met with so much of difficulties and hardships on the way but never went discouraged or tired. I did not even know how to maintain the registers. So I bought ordinary notebooks from the shop and maintained the registers and formed the group methodically. Once all of a sudden a call from the corporation invited all the NGO's to come with their registers for assessing and grading. They appreciated us for the proper maintaining of registers and our planning and rewarded me with Rs.30,000/



- I could not believe my eyes. The staff support to me generously.

People in the beginning did not believe when we said that they could avail loan from the banks provided we form a micro credit unit. With much difficulty we collected the people and taught them to rotate their own money for their own benefits. Gradually they understood the benefits. Once they had seen the outcome of it, they started showing a lot of interest. Government too came forward to help in organising free training with stipend such as beauticians, computer, nursing, tailoring, candle making and other E.D.P training to the people. Through these trainings the people learnt to choose their own career for future. The trainees brought the other poor folk for the training.

I was awarded for having linked more groups with banks. Some years ago the government of Tamil Nadu appreciating my works awarded our organisation as the best NGO. The best group from our NGO was also selected and awarded. We were gifted with Rs.5000/- in cash and certificates by Ms. Jayalalitha the then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. Later Mr. Karunanithi, the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, rewarded us Rs 50,000/- which is known as 'The Manimegala Award'. Now the women groups have come up very well and they stand on their own feet. In spite of the awards and appreciation we received, we also faced difficulties. Since ours is a registered NGO, the Government demands statements, accounts, statistics immediately without giving us enough time. In some cases repayment of loan is a problem. The struggles are endless as that of our rewards.

With heart felt gratitude to God we look back with pride the path we have tread along May God be praised for ever.

- *Sr. Dolores*

I thank Mariyalaya for providing me an opportunity to work for the poor

I liked to work for the poor in the society. Though my education and family situations did not allow me to go forward towards my journey, my heart's desire was fulfilled by Mariyalaya. After my Higher Secondary schooling I joined Mariyalaya as staff of N.F.E (Non-formal Education). After some years of work I was shifted to women development office by the same N.G.O. Though I did not know the work, because of my interest I was able to grasp the methodology of the work quite fast.



Since people were cheated by many chit funds and other financiers, we were not able to convince the people regarding Self Help Groups. Our target was only on women living in the slum area and the area given to me was totally poor. But I took it as a challenge and did it with commitment and love for the poor. With the help of God now I have succeeded in forming more than 60 groups. In this work, it is very difficult to convince people about the importance of savings and micro credit. Once they experienced the real worth of it, many wanted to join and requested us to start Self Help Groups in many places. Now I am happy and fulfilled. I am happy to work here with all the difficulties. I thank the N.G.O for this opportunity.

- Miss. Vellankani

Dowry is a curse on women

I work with the poor women in Puliadithammam, Sivagangai District for the past four years. I have formed 13 Self Help Groups so far.

They do various types of activities to earn their livelihood, such as cycle shop, preparing bricks for the construction of the building etc.

Most of the women are illiterate. They are coolie workers but they want to educate their children.



They have faith and trust in God. It is very hard to teach them because their capacity to comprehend is very poor. They are very generous particularly in helping the needy. If it comes to their notice that the neighbouring families are suffering or they are in need of help they are quick to help them. They celebrate various feasts in different ways and from each feast I learn something worthwhile for my life.

The women who are the members of Annal Magalir Mandram participate in all the programmes which are conducted by the Salesian sisters of Arunodaya. They also participate in the cultural programmes. It is a great surprise for me that five of our women stood for the panchayat election, won and have

become the ward councilors. They carry out their duties in a responsible way. Now they have learnt to write petition and fight for their rights.



They are growing very well because of their willingness to cooperate.

Though on the one hand the women grow wonderfully well, some of our women are suffering because of dowry problem. Our women need to grow in many ways. They need to be united when they fight to get their rights. They must take a strong decision that they will not give or ask dowry. The society must not discriminate the women on the basis of gender. Every one must respect each other and consider every one else as children of God. These are my challenges in the field. Though I have been working only for four years, I am very happy to see their growth.

- *Sr. Carolyn*

Province report prepared by

Sr. Joseph Lumin Priscilla FMA

Social Development Coordinator

Chennai Province - INM

SHILLONG - INS



SHILLONG PROVINCE

A. General profile

1. Name of the Province : Immaculate Heart of Mary, Shilong
2. Name of the Social Development Office : FMA – Outreach for Underprivileged Women and Children (FMA –OUWC)
- a. Name of the S. D.C. : Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana
Address with pin code : Lurshai, Post Box 19 Lumshyiap, Shillong – 793 001 Maghalaya
- b. Tel. No (0364) 259 15 30
Mobile (0) 96121 55980
Email insfmaecon@gmail.com
- d. Year of Establishment : 2000
- e. Registration number and year : No. E. 16 (Rs) 30/2001/446
Dated 20 August 2003

Vision

We commit to work for the integral and sustainable development of the marginalized groups to promote and empower their potentials in an environment upholding the values of human rights and dignity, eco-friendly, justice and peace in a spirit of solidarity.

Mission

To promote empowerment, quality education, training, health status, employment and net working through appropriate strategies for the marginalized groups in the operational area.

Service areas

- a. Number of states covered : 4 Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura and part of Assam (Karbi Anglong)

- b. Number of districts covered : 7 districts
- c. Priority groups : Adivasis/ Tribals, Dalits, Fisherfolk
- d. Total number of beneficiaries : Women 10,000 ; Children : 15,000

B. Details of Self Help Groups / Federation

- a) Year of starting : 2005
- b) Total number of groups : 250
- c) Number of women groups : 200
- Number of men groups : 50
- d) Average number of member in a group : 10
- e) Frequency of meetings : Monthly
- f) Mode of saving : Monthly
- g) Total savings upto June 2009 : Rs. 80, 00,000/-
- h) Total loans upto June 2009 :
 - a) Internal loan : Rs. 50, 00,000/-
 - b) Bank loan : Rs. 30, 00,000/-
- i) Total number of people involved in IGP : 2000
- j) Number of persons engaged in each : 10 category
- n) Approximate income from each category : Rs. 10,000/-
- o) Number of SHGs linked to Bank : 200

The main activities of SHGs : Animal rearing, Ginger cultivation, Paddy cultivation, Petty shops, Turmeric cultivation, Tailoring

Awareness and training programmes conducted for SHGs/ Federation

a) Awareness programme	:	Health HIV/AIDS Anti Alcoholism Religious harmony Environment and Ecology Peace and Harmony in the Family
b) Training Programme		Entrepreneurships skills Book-keeping Social audit in NRGES Silk worm Training Low cost of building a house Candle making Health, Accounting Leadership skills Community mobilization Agriculture Environment NRGES
Other skills		Accounting skills Leadership skills Legal Education

C. History

The FMA-Outreach for Underprivileged Women and Children (FMA-OUWC) is a Non-Government Organization (NGO) which began in 2000 and registered with the government of Meghalaya in 2003 - vide Memo No. E.16 (RS)30/2001/446 dated 20th August 2003.

This work is aimed at reaching out to the poor, especially the women and children in the rural areas. The office of the organization was

shifted from the Provincial House, Auxilium, Nongthymmai to Mary Our Help Training Centre, Bellefonte, with Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana as the Director of the NGO and Sr. Helen Puwein as the Deputy Director.

With the passing of time, and the progress of the work, the necessity of a separate building was keenly felt to pave way for better implementation of different outreach programs. Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana with her enterprising spirit set to work to tap all the governmental and non-governmental financial resources to make the organization as it is at the present moment.

To solve the problem of the congestion of the Vocational Training Centre at Mary Our Help Training Centre, due to increase of the number of beneficiaries, the Vocational Training Centre from Mary Our Help Training Centre and the National Institute of Open School from Sacred Heart Higher Secondary School Mawlai were transferred to the newly constructed building at FMA-Outreach for Underprivileged women and Children for better follow up and regular classes of school drop-outs.

Sr. Helen Puwein plunged whole heartedly by visiting villages in the different districts of Meghalaya to empower tribal rural women through the formation of Self Help Groups. Since then, different awareness and training programs were conducted for the FMAs, instructors, field staff, teachers, trainees and others by tapping resources from different foreign agencies, government and others for empowerment of different categories of beneficiaries in particular the young women. Vocational training centres cum hostel accommodation in 5 districts were constructed to enable poor village girls from far away to come for skill training and morning or evening schools.

On 4th June 2006 after discerning the various works carried out by FMA-Outreach for Underprivileged Women and Children, Mother General Mother Antonia Colombo in 2006 canonically erected FMA-

Outreach into a new Community with Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana as animator.

FMA-Outreach for Underprivileged Women and Children therefore from a humble beginning has now gradually become a gigantic tree spreading its activities in four North East States – Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram and part of Assam (Karbi angling). The project of Don Bosco and Mary Mazzarello for the poor and abandoned youth continues and the social ministry is strongly rooted. The fervour and enthusiasm of the spirit of the Da mihi Animas, training people as citizens of God and our country keep burning with love for the promotion of the underprivileged women and children. The poor as a whole under the protection of Mary Our Mother accompany us to go and forge ahead with courage.

Future empowerment of women

We would like to expand our works creating self employment and expanding employment opportunities for women in 5 more centres- Nongstoin, Tura, Lurshai, Jowai and Nongpoh, adopting 5 villages by establishing morning schools, evening schools for illiterates and school drop-outs, computer education and garment making, embroidery, food processing, floriculture and animal rearing and taking initiatives to stop human trafficking and drug addiction and also establishing rehabilitation centres and catering to domestic workers, street children and others.

Embroidery

Tribal women like to wear embroidered dresses for themselves and for their children which are expensive, and embroidered dresses are more costly than the other dresses. So by stitching these dresses the women earn more income than ordinary stitching. They also make other articles such



as cushion covers, table clothes, handkerchiefs, bags, pillow case, bed covers, coir bags, etc.

Knitting

Winter season brings in heavy sales for knitting goods of different age groups. Training in knitting skills is a great help for poor tribal women.

Computer education

To improve communication skills, a language lab is very essential. By becoming computer literate the unemployed youth could create self employment and also get employment easily in government offices and others with good salary.



Animal Rearing

Animal rearing integrated with agriculture is the best sources of major income for rural people. The people consume plenty of meat for their daily food. Majority of the poor families support the education of their children through sale of animals.



School drop-outs

School drop-outs are given maximum care and attention in order to help many young boys and girls to return to the mainstream.



Food Processing

Food processing of local fruits and vegetables is highly in demand and is a sure means of daily income. It is a way to teach the people how to make use of the local products.

Micro credit scheme

A numbers of families of the SHGs and others are being helped to begin their own enterprise where they can earn their livelihood and improve their standard of living.



Health mission

Most of our houses are situated in rural areas. In all these places we have dispensaries with qualified nurses to attend to the sick people who suffer from various ailments.

Many people depend totally on the

sisters and these centers are the only means to save the lives of the people.

Value and leadership formation

Along with job oriented skills that will enable them to earn a decent living, the participants will be trained in personality development, communication skills and moral and human values which will help them to live a dignified life and have full participation in the community.

Linkage with NGOs, HR organisations and Government

Bosco Reach Out, Don Bosco Mumbai, SKIP Bangalore, FVTRS Bangalore, Khadi Industries, District Industries, Social Welfare, DRDA, Block Development, DONER, Departments of Agriculture, Veterinary,

Sports and Youth Affairs, PHE, Fratelli Dimenticati, Mission Don Bosco, DMOS/COMIDE, MIVA, Missio, Mascheski Foundation

Achievements and awards received

Registration of FMA-OUWC as full fledged NGO with FCRA account and tax exemption

Established six vocational training and computer centres.

D. Success stories

We make money by cultivating ginger

Nongkya is a very poor village that falls under Myllem Development Block of East Khasi Hills District. It is a just 12 km from the city of Shillong. The village consists of 40 families and all are

agriculturists. The land is very fertile and the farmers are hardly aware of any new agricultural techniques. Basic infrastructure such as electricity, roads and safe drinking water are not available.



On March 31, 2008 the Sunbathing self help group comprising of women and men received Rs. 1,50,000/- from Rome Generalate through Sr. Giorgi Rosangiola and invested in ginger cultivation for larger scale production. Today the group earns more by selling the ginger at local market for 50 rupees per kg. This program had helped them to improve the socio-economic condition of their families.

I too can do what others do

I am a crippled girl from one of the interior villages of West Khasi Hills. I have been in this condition after my sickness which affected me when I was small. My parents are poor and so could not give me proper treatment. Some people came to help me, namely the sisters of Nirmala at Sonapahar, priests and others. But I was diffident and had no determination.



It was only in 2006 when I met Sr.

Magdalene Synnah FMA of Nongstoin I began to look at life differently. I accepted myself as I was. I had reached High School then and I was lucky to be sent to FMA-Outreach for two years, where I could attend NIOS classes and Vocational Training and computer Education at the same time. I began to grow in self confidence and I said to myself, "I too can do what others do. I was determined to pass my NIOS, Vocational Training in Tailoring, Embroidery and Computer. I realized I am not different from other children and at last I succeeded in all.

I am doing now my pre-college course through IGNOU studying from home in St. Peter's Convent, Nongstoin and at the same time teaching computer and garment making to children there.

I thank God for helping me to accept myself and all the sisters and fathers who have helped me, and I ask other handicapped children never to get discouraged, but to take life as it comes from the permissive will of God.

- Shaidealine Diengngan

E. Joy of working in social ministry

God who has led me all the way

I have been placed under obedience to get involved directly in social ministry from 2000 onwards. Since then life for me has been a challenging one, and I realize that to work for the good of the society I have to keep on challenging myself both physically and spiritually. In the social ministry I have learnt to accept myself and others as we are. I have learnt to act “not as others do or say, but as what I have to do and say.” I have also learnt to accept praises and criticism, for I know what is really true and genuine is what comes from God. I also realize that to form the whole person, we have to take care of both soul and body for the two are inseparable. So social ministry helps me to take care of the physical part of the person and religion takes care of the spiritual part and both of them complement one another. We cannot do one and leave the other.



I am very happy to be placed in this ministry which gives me joy and happiness. I have been able to fulfill my vision as much as my capacity permits in caring my neighbors.

My joy is rekindled whenever I see the sisters of different communities of the province collaborate with the Development Office in different awareness and training programs, by their active participation to update themselves in FMA OUWC. My desire is first and foremost to see our sisters being aware of and updated according to the signs of the time, for I know Don Bosco was always ahead of time. It is by so doing that

we will be efficacious and successful in our works for the people, in particular our young people, for we cannot give what we do not have. Therefore in the last 10 years 2 participatory strategic planning were conducted for the province, and many awareness and training programs were conducted by FMA – Outreach for the sisters, teachers, field staff and trainees.

It is always a joy for me to be able to do something for our marginalized youth, women and children. With God's blessings we have been able to set up many Vocational Training Centres in various districts and non-formal schools for the non-literates and school drop-outs, where hundreds of adults, children and youth have bridge courses and re-enter mainstream education. We try to impart multi-skills training to our trainees to enable them to earn money from different sources. The priority is for self employment, as the majority who come to us are always those who do not know where to go.

I thank God and my superiors for enabling me to put into proper use my talents and capacities through Social Ministry and as long as I am in this office, I will keep on challenging against the blocks and barriers that come on my way, for I am sure God who has led me all the way will continue to be with me to guide me.

- Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana

Making women self-confident

I have seen in most of the villages in Meghalaya women are more prone to poverty than men. And as a whole our assessment is that though poverty has declined in the mining areas and villages close to towns, it has worsened in the interior

due to stagnation in agricultural production, soil erosion and lack of new economic opportunities. In fact falling productivity of jhum lands and the ban on timber felling may have increased destitution in the remote villages.

Food grain production of Meghalaya has gone up by 74% while its population increased by 125%. Structural conditions under which land is cultivated, such as insecurity of tenure, rising tenancy and landlessness, increasing concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few have resulted in the increase in number of poor.

Despite having a matrilineal society, Meghalaya lags behind other North East states in several social indicators, such as birth rate, IMR, rural families having electricity or toilet facilities. Although houses or farm lands are registered in the name of women, these are managed by the male relatives. Women have always been diffident and refuse to come to the forefront whereas men feel that it is their right to be in decision-making positions. The very fact that women are made to feel proud that their children derive lineage from them, lulls them into a comfort zone from where they are not ready to come out. It would take an intensive gender sensitization programme to make them actually understand their potential and the need to break the age-old shackles and mindset.

There are no land records in Meghalaya. The main beneficiaries of the lands are the upper class, those who have economic and political power. Hence it is a great concern to educate the poor people. These are the challenges which ultimately will affect the society, especially the rural community. I feel along with teaching them the love of God

and God experience we also need to educate them about their rights and values. Yet another big challenge is the ignorance of the people which is being thoroughly exploited by the rich. Lack of communication systems makes our work very tiring physically and mentally.

However during the past years our SHG programs besides imparting the methods of economic growth also educated them on different rights and to come out from their low-image and be self-confident. We are happy to see the poor women coming out of their old mindset. We inculcate in them the preventive system by capacitating the poor to look beyond their future to prevent them from further injustices and discrimination.

- Sr. Helen Puwein

I have been working as a field worker in the Salesian Development Office of Shillong Province, Bellefonte from 2004. I have gained lots of experiences and have learnt many things as a field worker. In these years I have



1. Built up good relationship with others.
2. Enjoyed good rapport with the people.
3. Have overcome shyness.
4. Increased my power of observation

5. Participated in many training programmes like documentation, banking system and TOT (Training for Trainers).

Besides these, I also encountered some problems. Lack of transportation and communication made my work difficult especially in organizing training programmes. Moreover the officers are situated only in the towns. So for everything I need to come to the towns. The work is very demanding and the salary is not up to the expectation. I am happy that I am able to help many people to come up in their lives. This gives me joy and satisfaction.

- Mr. Francis Thyrnian

I have grown in self-confidence

I have been working as a field animator since 2004. I faced many challenges particularly during 2004 – 2005 in undergoing training programmes and also in forming the SHG groups. I was almost disheartened and I thought to myself that I was a fool or the least of all the field workers. But now as time passed by I have learnt the methodology and have developed skills to impart training to the groups I am working with. I have come to understand better about the work and am able to help others particularly to enlighten them on some of their misconception about the groups. With patience amidst my own weaknesses I have built up my self-confidence.



- Ms. Decimora Tympuin

Province report prepared by

Sr. Lina Mary Kharjana FMA

Social Development Coordinator

Shillong Province - INS

FMA India SHG National Network

— An overview

In this final chapter a summary of the works done by FMA India in social ministry, particularly in the women empowerment sector is presented. It is not an exhaustive account of all the works of FMAs related to women empowerment. FMAs employ many strategies and are engaged in a gamut of activities such as vocational, skill and leadership training, IGPs and livelihood programmes, Self Help Groups, NIOS, educational help, street children, migrant and trafficked women, juvenile care etc. The purpose of this compilation is to highlight the works among women mainly through SHGs and IGPs in India.

It is astounding to see the quality and volume of works done by FMA India, a relatively small group of sisters 95 fulltime and 33 part time along with 106 fulltime lay staff and 32 part time staff.

Out of 447 districts in India, SHG process is initiated by FMAs in 83 districts which is about 19 percent. Among the women beneficiaries a large number of them are dalit women. Adivasis and tribals, migrants, fisherfolk and farmers are also the focus groups with women being the entry point to reach out to the families. The number of beneficiaries as presented below (Ref. Table No 3) is calculated in terms of individual beneficiaries who are directly benefited by the various interventions of FMAs. To arrive at the real picture one must keep in mind that each individual represents a family. In most cases these families are cluster families belonging to a village and community. The success stories presented by many individuals portray lucidly how the various works of FMAs have brought in new hopes in the lives of the millions of poor, particularly the marginalised and excluded in our society.

While the market fundamentalism has ruined the rural economy it is amazing to observe the success stories of FMA India SHG network which has reenergised the rural populace particularly the women through systematic implementation of micro credit system.

Highlights of the SHG network

- a. FMAs are animating over 3500 SHGs. Yet another noteworthy aspect is that nearly 200 SHGs are initiated among men and youth.
- b. Total saving of these groups amount to over 20 crore rupees (200 million rupees)
- c. By a system of internal loaning to the members of SHGs the 20 crore saving of the people over the years has multiplied and at present the total savings of the people along with interest collected stands at nearly 32 crores.
- d. In the form of subsidies, grants and loans the banks have supported these groups to the tune of 19.5 crores.
- e. The total money in circulation at present stands at approximately 52 crores.
- f. A large portion of this amount is ploughed back into rural entrepreneurship activities such as Income Generation Programmes (IGPs), cooperatives, livelihood expansion activities etc. These interventions have not only freed the women from the clutches of money lenders but also increased the purchasing power of the women in the villages, which according to economists like Amartya Sen and Amit Badhuri is an authentic development.
- g. Along with micro credit scheme, various trainings given in the form of leadership, communication, counselling, skill formation, social orientation, social concern, legal and human rights, safe and healthy environment, anti-alcoholism etc are add on values which have tremendously contributed for the all round growth of the individuals. Through the effective functioning of the self-help groups in number of cases the development process has reached to the village community itself.
- h. From the success stories of the beneficiaries one can rightly say that FMAs vision and mission among the women is very much in tune with Millennium Development Goals, namely 'Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger' (Goal 1) and 'Promote gender equality and empower women' (Goal 3).

- i. The Chennai province, true to its spirit of being the mother province has played a major role in giving flesh to the ideals as enshrined in the recent chapters and the document on Cooperation for Development. None the less, the data shows clearly that every province is making an earnest attempt in making a paradigm shift to adapt and expand the mission as per the signs of the times.

The following tables speak volumes about the class and quantum of work of FMA-India. All tables are as on 31st August 2009.

Table 1: Details of Countries, States and Districts

Name of the province	Number of Countries	Number of States	Number of Districts
INB - Mumbai	1	4	17
INC - Kolkata	3 (India, Nepal and Tibet)	7	20
ING - Guwahati	1	4	16
INK - Bangalore	1	3	16
INM - Tamil Nadu	2 (India and Sri Lanka)	1	10
INS - Shillong	1	4	4
Total		23	83

Table 2: Details of Personnel

Name of the province	FMA fulltime	FMA Part-time	Lay staff fulltime	Lay staff part-time	Total fulltime	Total part-time	Total
INB - Mumbai	13	6	15	18	28	24	52
INC - Kolkata	11	-	12	-	23	-	23
ING - Guwahati	30	-	24	-	54	-	54
INK - Bangalore	10	16	22	12	32	28	60
INM - Tamil Nadu	27	11	23	2	50	13	63
INS - Shillong	4	-	10	-	14	-	14
Total	95	33	106	32	201	65	266

Personnel in Social Ministry

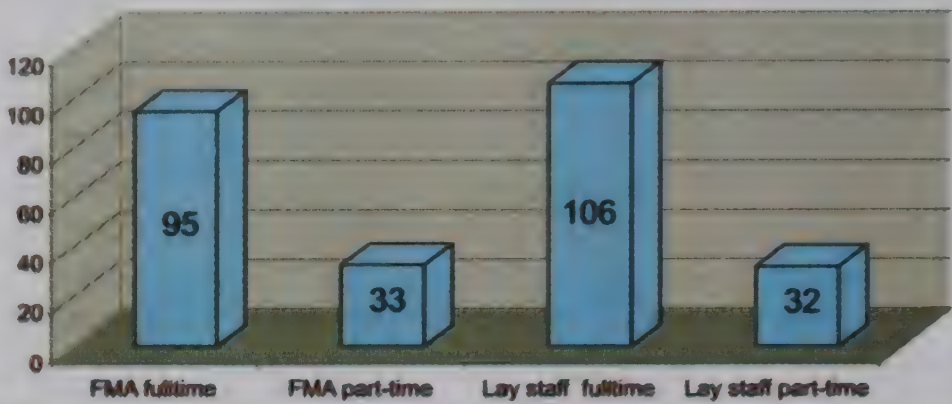


Table 3 : Category of Beneficiaries

Name of the province	Dalits	Adivasis / Tribals	Farmers	Fisherfolk	Migrants	Leprosy patients	Widows	Other workers	Total
INB - Mumbai	2,773	575	-	60	80	-	-	1,508	4,996
INC - Kolkata	1,000	2,750	-	-	1,038	-	-	300	5,088
ING - Guwahati	-	6,050	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,050
INK - Bangalore	10,000	5,000	50,000	25,000	3,500	-	-	6,500	100,000
INM - Tamil Nadu	150,000	15,000	30,000	15,000	30,000	5,000	5,000	50,000	300,000
INS - Shillong	8,000	10,000	-	7,000	-	-	-	-	25,000
Total	171,773	39,375	80,000	47,060	34,618	5,000	5,000	58,308	441,134

Category of Beneficiaries

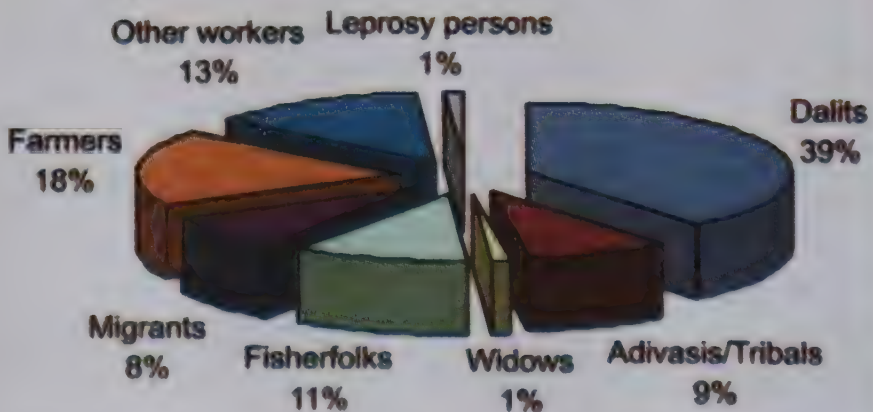


Table 4
Details of Self Help Groups

Name of the province	Women	Men	Youth	Widows	People with disability	Total
INB - Mumbai	362	4	0	0	0	366
INC - Kolkata	266	0	0	0	0	266
ING - Guwahati	550	51	0	0	0	601
INK - Bangalore	663	6	0	0	0	669
INM - Tamil Nadu	1,270	66	16	2	2	1,356
INS - Shillong	200	50	0	0	0	250
Total	3,311	177	16	2	2	3,508

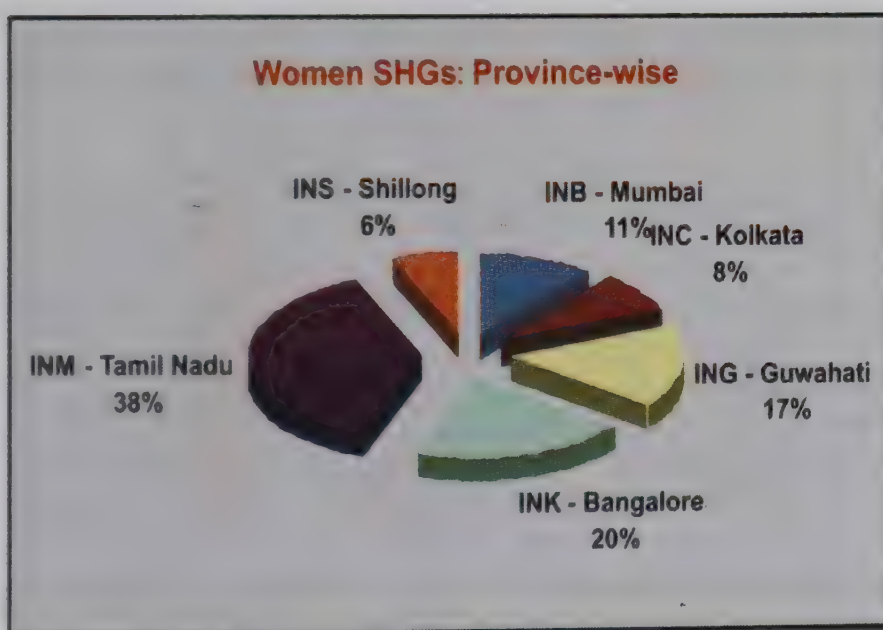


Table 5
Savings

Name of the province	Amount Saved
INB - Mumbai	18,683,167.00
INC - Kolkata	NA
ING - Guwahati	7,500,000.00
INK - Bangalore	22,332,953.00
INM - Tamil Nadu	149,824,981.00
INS - Shillong	8,000,000.00
Total	206,341,101.00

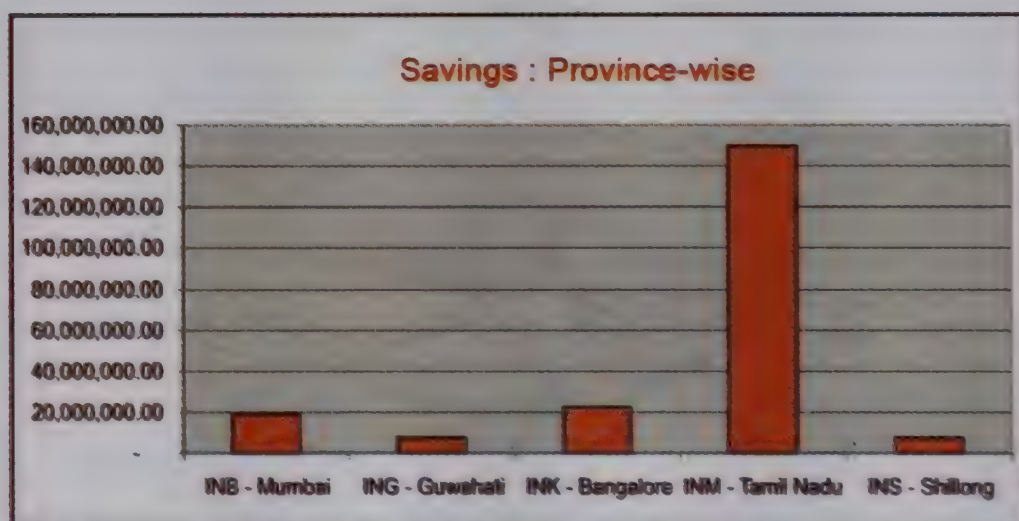
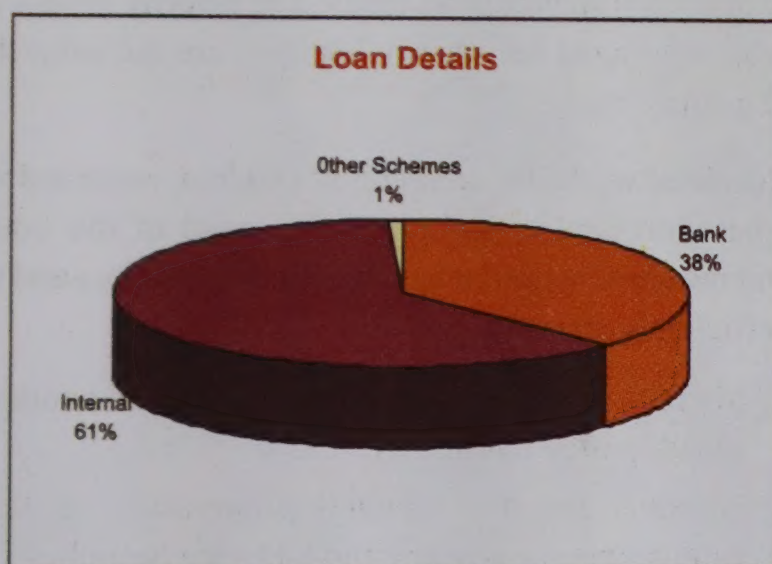


Table 6: Loan Details

Name of the province	Bank	Internal	Other	Total
INB - Mumbai	5,760,615.00	14,355,952.00	0	20116567.00
INC - Kolkata	NA	NA	NA	NA
ING - Guwahati	2,700,000.00	500,000.00	4,000,000.00	7200000.00
INK - Bangalore	34,394,768.00	0	0	34,394,768.00
INM - Tamil Nadu	149,556,664.00	29,964,9962.00	933,350.00	300,583,312.00
INS - Shillong	3,000,000.00	5,000,000.00		8,000,000.00
Total	195,412,047.00	319,505,914.00	4,933,350.00	519,851,311.00



Opportunities and Challenges

GC XXII highlights the global challenges of the poor today. It says that we are living in a world where *love is scarce*. In order to expand this sacred space we need to reflect on the following broader concerns and respond to them in a collective manner.

- ♦ The globalization of the planet leading to individualism and consumerism
- ♦ Economic crisis owing to lack of ethics in the neo-liberal vision

- ♦ Growing new forms of fundamentalism
- ♦ Exploitation of natural resources
- ♦ Violence perpetrated against young women and children
- ♦ Human mobility and migration

To effectively address these global concerns the strategies suggested are: being educating communities and promoting preventive system; accompanying the poor and taking up a courageous journey; taking Mary as a role model and moving out of the comfort zones; strengthening network mentality and becoming inter-cultural, crossing all boundaries. Taking inspiration from GC XXII let me add that in all these the FMAs are to realise that the marginalised children, youth and women are the theological places where God speaks to us today. The priority groups are not the objects who need our charity but they are the subjects, who demand justice.

In the globalised world, the problems of children, youth and women, cannot be addressed in isolation. The need of the hour is to transcend the administrative boundaries of provinces and regions and to efficiently strengthen

- a. Micro – macro linkages and solidarity networks (issue based, policy based etc)
- b. National and international cooperation for learning, campaigning, advocacy and lobbying for policy changes
- c. Study, research and action and
- d. Collective spirituality for struggle.

Unquestionably the last two Chapters have brought in fresh air among the FMAs all over the world in their thinking and action. Responding to the clarion call of the Chapters FMA-India has taken a conscious and courageous step to move forward in social ministry as FMA-India so that marginalised children, youth and women will grow in fullness of life as rights realised citizens of India. Let us remind ourselves that we have miles to go before we could rest!

Fr. Joseph Xavier SJ





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